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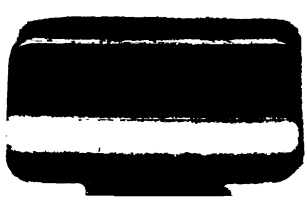

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THE WOMAN TRUSTEE

AND OTHER

STORIES ABOUT SCHOOLS

BY

C. W. BARDEEN

Editor of The School Bulletin

SYRACUSE, N. Y.

C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER

1904

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These stories appeared in the successive monthly issues of The School Bulletin from July to December, 1904. Though each is complete itself, the same characters reappear occasionally, and some of them will be remembered by readers of the stories in "Fifty-five Years Old".

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THE WOMAN TRUSTEE

I

"This is the place," said Mrs. Washburn, pausing at the entrance to an apartment house and nodding at a bay window on the first floor.

"She has an unconceited little sign," remarked Emily Wells, looking at the plain gold letters on a narrow black board:

ELIZABETH LYNDON, M. D.

"I hope she is as unconceited as her sign," said Miss Ames, "but I doubt it. These professional women are usually uppish."

"Perhaps you misjudge them," said Mrs. Washburn gently; "when a woman has to elbow her way into a calling hitherto monopolized by men she sometimes has to assume a self-confidence she does not feel."

The modest little sign had not attracted many patients in Winchendon. Dr. Lyndon was prepared to look for slow and small beginnings, but it did seem as if in six months there ought to have been more emergencies, more calls upon her in the temporary absence of other physicians. So when in the latter part of July the bell rang and these ladies presented themselves, she hoped the call was professional. She was disappointed.

"Dr. Lyndon," asked Mrs. Washburn, "are you interested in woman suffrage?"

She wasn't. She had found so many embarrassments and humiliations in preparing

herself for her profession that her feeling was to preserve what little femininity she was still credited with, and leave to men the monopoly of such non-essentials as voting. But Mrs. Washburn's kind, motherly face attracted her, and she felt she should like to know her. So she softened her natural response into, "I have never thought much about it."

"We women here," said Mrs. Washburn, after introducing herself and her companions, "feel especially interested in school suffrage. The law gives women in villages like this the right to vote for school officers and to hold office. We have never had a woman representative on the board of education, and we are starting a movement to elect a woman trustee at the school meeting next month."

"What are your plans?" asked Dr. Lyndon.

"We want to arouse public sentiment. We have prepared a petition that we hope to get five hundred women and some men to sign, calling upon the voters to elect a woman. Then we mean to have one or two mass meetings, with distinguished suffrage speakers from abroad."

Dr. Lyndon reflected a moment. "Are you sure that is the best way?" she asked. "My father used to be on the school board at home and I saw something of school matters. Very few voted at the school elections there. Do you know how many votes were cast here last time?"

"No, I don't; probably not many; people take little interest in school elections. The board renominates the men whose time

has expired, and the few who go to the polls vote for these men the next day."

"Then why would it not be better instead of starting this open movement and forewarning the men, to make a quiet canvass just before the meeting, and have the women turn out unexpectedly in numbers sufficient to cast a majority of the votes?"

"A capital idea," exclaimed Mrs. Washburn, with a twinkle in her eye; "I do so like to get a joke on the men."

The four women at once became allies and the details of the campaign were arranged. On the first Wednesday of August two hundred women were invited to a sewing circle at Mrs. Washburn's, not far from the place of election. An hour before the polls closed these women filed out, and not only cast their own votes, but by occupying the line prevented any one else from

voting. Word was hastily sent to some members of the board, but the president was out of town, and nobody seemed to know how to cope with the emergency. So the women's candidate was elected two to one.

Much to Dr. Lyndon's surprise and somewhat to her discomfiture, when the printed ballots had been brought to Mrs. Washburn's sewing circle they bore her name, the ladies having been much impressed not only by her general good sense but by her knowledge of school law. It was too late to protest and she found herself a member of the board of education.

II

In planning her work as a member of the board, Dr. Lyndon's first thought was to avoid the mistakes that a woman would be expected to make. For instance, she

had not had much experience in business on a large scale; in such matters she could be for a long time only a learner. In fact she meant to keep way in the background the first year in all matters, learning all she could, but realizing that she was not qualified to advise with these men of long experience.

At the first meeting she was treated with profuse courtesy. This she hoped to overcome. She had never had time or inclination for sentiment, but she had known and liked some fine men, and been admitted to their companionship on the level; the compliment she most cherished was from a man classmate of hers at the medical school, who had said, " Miss Lyndon, you are a mighty good fellow." She meant these men should find her a fellow-member, not a lady visitor; but of course that would take time.

Judge Fellows was re-elected president, and immediately appointed the committees. He placed Dr. Lyndon on the teachers and course of study committees, and made her chairman of the committee on care of buildings.

"What are the duties of that committee?" she asked.

"To see that the janitor keeps house properly," replied the judge. "You are doubly fitted: as a woman to look after the house-keeping, and as a physician to see that the conditions are sanitary."

Dr. Lyndon bowed, and resolved to do that work well. So when book agents swarmed around her she listened to them and took their books and promised to examine them and did examine them, but in committee deferred to the judgment of the two experienced members. When teachers came

to her for places, she heard their stories, astonished they should offer so many other reasons for appointment besides fitness, but never questioned the judgment of Mr. Burbank and Judge Fellows, the other members of the committee.

But the schoolhouse she resolved to know better than anyone else knew it. She bought all attainable books on school architecture and sanitation and hygiene. She became a frequent visitor, and after a little a welcome visitor. At first the teachers, especially the women teachers, were suspicious of her, thinking she would interefere and make herself disagreeable. But she soon got their confidence. She asked questions of them deferently, really wanted the benefit of their experience, and where changes were necessary made them as far as possible through them.

One of the first things that troubled her was the eyesight of pupils. The blackboards were old and shiny, and at different times of the day reflected only a glare to different parts of the room. This she brought to the attention of the teachers, and got the teachers themselves to petition for fresh slating. In so doing she made the teachers observant, and led them to lessen the amount of blackboard work to be read from the seats, and to look for need of glasses among the children.

III

The problem of ventilation proved the most serious. The Winchendon schoolhouse was heated by an enormous single furnace, sending hot-air pipes all over the building. There were one or more so-called ventilators in each room, but they were at the top of the rooms and if opened at all were sup-

posed only to carry off the comparatively fresh hot air.

Dr. Lyndon bought a series of Woulfe's bottles, and began to make and record observations. The results were appalling; not seldom before the close of school in the afternoon the instrument showed 3 to 4 per cent of carbonic dioxide.

Dr. Lyndon did what she could with window ventilation without endangering the pupils who sat near, but still the figures were sickening. She began to study the furnace itself. She found that the cold air box through which the fresh air was supposed to come in to be warmed and distributed was closed, so that the air sent up stairs was drawn out of the cellar. She called the janitor to account. He was a little weazened Irishman, who had held the place from time immemorial, and who

looked condescendingly at this slip of a girl who was interfering through ignorance.

"Why, Miss Lyndon," he said—he had frequently remarked that he wouldn't never call no woman doctor—"if you open that air box it will take twice the coal. That outside air eats up coal powerful fast."

"Never mind, Mr. Donovan," she said; "the school board will furnish the coal; don't let that box be closed again except when the wind is from the east, and then only partly."

The janitor was inclined to grumble, but he noticed that every time she came to the school she looked at the cold-air box first, so he thought it prudent to leave it open.

But still the ventilation was abominable. Sometimes an odor came up through the registers that was much more than carbonic dioxide—the fetid carbonic oxide, to breathe

which is not merely absence of oxygen but active poison. She looked into the matter and found that this occurred when large quantities of fresh fuel were shovelled at once upon the hot coals, forming a blue flame that gave out quantities of this gas. She thoroughly informed herself about this, and then explained to the janitor why he should never feed the furnace in this way while the school was in session, but instead put on the fresh coal in small quantities.

He listened with growing impatience. He did not mind the coal air box so much; that was a silly notion but it wasn't much bother. But to put on only a shovel or two full of coal at a time meant a good deal of extra work, and he was by no means inclined to comply. He tried to argue the matter; failing there he simply refused.

Dr. Lyndon was astonished. Her com-

mittee had practical charge of hiring and discharging the janitor, and she was practically the committee. That he should venture upon rebellion was inconceivable. She said as much to him.

He looked at her disdainfully. "Why you crowing hen," he exclaimed, "I was janitor of this building long before you were born, and I shall be janitor of it long after Winchendon has forgot the dirty trick by which you got yourself elected on the board for one short term."

The man was not even drunk; he was simply giving vent to the pent-up wrath that had been accumulating ever since Dr. Lyndon began to inspect his work.

She understood that she had power to discharge him; but not to be precipitate she consulted the other two members of the committee. She went first to the Reverend

Mr. Kennedy, a ponderous, solemn man, rector of a little Episcopal church on the outskirts. He listened impassively, and when she had finished her story said as if delivering a pope's opinion ex cathedra, "You are unquestionably right. I shall support you in the committee and on the board."

The other member, Mr. Tucker, a fat little grocer, was more demonstrative. She found him tying up packages for the delivery wagon, and when she repeated the janitor's language he was furious. "I wish I had been there," he said, pounding down on the counter so hard that his fist broke open a package of loaf sugar; "I would have kicked him out of the building."

Dr. Lyndon smiled within; Mr. Tucker's figure did not really fit him to kick even so small a man as the janitor; still she appre-

ciated his sympathy and his warm support.

As it happened there was a special board-meeting that night, and she reported to the full board. There was no dissenting voice, the only regret expressed being on the part of two other men who, like Mr. Tucker, wished they had been there to hear him use such language to her; he would have learned a lesson. She was assured that she had full authority to discharge the man and hire another in his place, and was blamed as too lenient when she expressed her purpose of giving Donovan a fortnight's notice.

IV

The regular meeting occurred the next week, and when reports of committees were called for she stated that she had discharged Donovan and hired in his place a man who had been janitor of an apartment house in Pepperell, who understood heating and ven-

tilating thoroughly, and who had excellent references which she had verified for sobriety, faithfulness, and good character.

The report was received and placed on file, and the business of the meeting proceeded. Dr. Lyndon felt that she had managed the matter well, in fact in a way creditable to her sex; she did not see how any man on the board could have been more moderate or careful or successful.

Her mind was rather upon this than upon the routine work of the evening, and when the president asked if there were any communications she paid little attention to the statement of the clerk that there was one from the Trades Assembly. The president asked that it be presented, and the clerk read as follows:

"Whereas, Michael Donovan has been janitor of the union school building for

more than twenty-eight years, and is a respectable citizen and member of the community, and likewise belongs to the Trades Assembly; and,

"Whereas, a certain female elected by trickery to the board of education has interfered with said Michael Donovan's prerogatives, and shown herself an ignorant and mischief-making meddler; and,

"Whereas, when in performance of his loyal duties to the school and to the community said Michael Donovan refused to make changes in his care of the furnace which would have prevented the proper heating of the building and entailed great cost of additional coal upon the tax-paying community, said female member of the board did thereupon assume to discharge said Michael Donovan from the position he has so long and so honorably held, and at

such great benefit to the community, which does not care to be experimented upon by persons who have unsexed themselves and entered upon professions and civil offices that belong to the stronger sex; therefore,

"Resolved, that the Trades Assembly and all the allied unions of the village of Winchendon do hereby protest against this assumption of arbitrary authority on the part of this female member of the board; and,

"Resolved, that we call upon the other members of the board to vindicate the rights of labor and restore said Michael Donovan without delay."

Dr. Lyndon was very much amused as the reading proceeded, and looked for a burst of merriment when it was concluded.

But the other members seemed grave. After some silence, during which Dr. Lyn-

don looked in perplexity from one face to another, Judge Fellows asked:

"What do you say to these resolutions, Dr. Lyndon?"

"Why, they seem more like opera bouffe than sober earnest. It hardly seems possible that intelligent men could have written them or passed them."

"But they are signed by every union in Winchendon," said Mr. Burbank.

"It is a pity the unions are not more intelligently officered," she replied.

"It seems this Donovan is a high-up officer in the Trades Assembly," continued Mr. Burbank.

"I hope he does his work there better than in the schoolhouse," she said.

"You don't realize the situation, Dr. Lyndon," said Judge Fellows. "Our charter election comes next month. We have

so large a foreign population that the vote is nearly equal between the two parties. This board of education is republican. Unless we accede to this request the democrats will carry the March election, and it may be years before we get control again."

"I don't understand," replied Dr. Lyndon. "How can we be a republican board of education? A majority may vote the republican ticket on national issues, but there are no national issues here. All we are concerned for is to provide the best school we can for the money given us to spend."

"You can't dissociate elections like that," said Judge Fellows, indulgently. "Elections are carried by organization, and though the issues are different in national and state and local elections, the organization has to be depended upon to secure the desired

results. Now it would never do for the organization to fly in the face of the Trades Assembly; that controls too many votes."

"But you don't mean to say you propose to rescind your action in this janitor matter?" she asked.

"Why, as a matter of fact, Dr. Lyndon, the board has not taken action on that matter," said Mr. Tucker.

"At the meeting last week you every one agreed that our committee was to discharge him," she said.

"But that was only the expression of individual opinion; there was no formal action by the board as a whole," said Mr. Burbank.

"In other words, you gentlemen simply made promises to a woman, and you do not consider yourselves bound," she exclaimed indignantly.

"You ought to be reasonable, Dr. Lyndon," said the judge wincing. "We have tried to be courteous to you, and to treat you not only as a lady but as a valued fellow member. But we all of us have to change our views and our plans as exigencies arise. We did not know that this man Donovan was high up in labor circles, or suspect that he would go stirring up these unions till he had all organized labor enlisted in his behalf. These facts make new conditions, and we have to consider the question from a different point of view."

"The voice of the people is the voice of Gawd," said Mr. Kennedy, in solemn tones.

"I think I understand, " said Dr. Lyndon scornfully. "I suppose when you gentlemen were boys if you were walking with a girl and a little boy insulted her you would fight him, but if a big brother of his

appeared you would apologize and run away."

"It seems hardly worth while to continue the discussion," said the judge; "we see as you do not the requirements of practical politics, and we must protect the higher interests of our organization. No doubt this man ought to be dismissed, but the school has got on with him twenty-eight years without going to destruction, and his discharge at just this juncture would do more harm in putting control of the village into the hands of unscrupulous men than it would do good to the school."

Dr. Lyndon flushed and started to speak impulsively, but with effort restrained herself. Then she said calmly but with dry throat, "May I ask for formal action on my report?"

A vote was taken and the eight men voted

not to adopt the report. Then Dr. Lyndon rose and spoke, again with difficulty to keep her throat moist. "Gentlemen, I came upon this board much to my surprise and with many misgivings. I found the work unexpectedly pleasant. You treated me courteously, you assigned me a kind of work I had fitted myself for, and I felt that I was making myself useful. It seemed to me that I had formed a pleasant acquaintance with you gentlemen, and I felt it a privilege to be associated with you and to see your methods of disposing of business. But this evening's action shows me that it will be quite impossible for me to work with you further, and I hereby resign my membership; and as I see how little acquaintance I really had with you, I shall ask that it be understood we have no acquaintance at all. Good evening, gentlemen."

She was as good as her word. Thereafter when she passed any member of the board upon the street she looked him as full in the eye as she would any stranger, and betrayed no recognition of any attempt on his part to bow. At an evening function where the hostess lacked tact to see that she and Judge Fellows were avoiding an encounter and insisted on thrusting them against each other, remarking, "Surely, Judge Fellows, you must be acquainted with Dr. Lyndon," the latter replied, "Judge Fellows and I know each other, but we are not acquainted," and turned away.

"Well, of all the impudence," the hostess started to say, but Judge Fellows interrupted her. "Dr. Lyndon is quite justified," he said gravely; "our board of education treated her shabbily."

She built up something of a practice in

Winchendon, being especially successful in dealing with children's diseases. One night as she was about to retire there was a wild ring at her bell. She found Mr. Tucker there. "Agnes—diphtheria—dying," he panted, agonizingly.

Before the last word was uttered she had seized her case of instruments, and she made her way to the house so rapidly that the anxious father could hardly keep up with her. She found the child gasping, she saw that heroic treatment was necessary, and she administered it unflinchingly. It was a narrow shave, but breathing was restored, and she said to the mother "There is hope." She sat by the bedside till seven in the morning, and then she said, "Your child is out of danger; with ordinary care she will recover."

She still ignored the father, she never

again entered the house; when he sent her a check for a hundred dollars she simply burned it, not even returning it. But the mother and she became close friends, and little Agnes is to-day her most frequent and most privileged caller.

Dr. Lyndon is well thought of in Winchendon. Few remember that she was once on the board of education, and when it is mentioned her friends say, "O well, what could you expect? That is no sort of work for a woman." Michael Donovan is still janitor. He has closed up the cold-air box, and he shovels on coal as he pleases. Judge Fellows has admitted more than once that nothing else has occurred in the board which gives him as much chagrin in the remembrance as its treatment of Dr. Lyndon. But the republicans still carry the village elections.

Without Credentials

WITHOUT CREDENTIALS

I

"Hello. Yes. Absolutely out of the question; why the term has only just begun. Well, what of it? Suppose we should go to him and say we have found a man who can teach fifty per cent better than he for the same money, and ask him to let us off from our contract. No, I tell you, Burbank, it isn't right; when people make contracts they should live up to them. Besides, this would leave the school in the lurch.

"Do you know anything about him? Why the idea of putting in a man we know nothing about. You're wild, Burbank.

It's all well enough to want to favor this young fellow, but we must consider the school first. O I'll see him, of course, but it's no use; things are going all right at the school now, and and I'm not going to swap horses crossing a stream, especially when I don't know the other horse."

Judge Fellows threw back the receiver of the telephone with an emphasis that showed his annoyance. Shortly after there was a knock at his office door, and he called, "Come in."

"Mr. Burbank sent me over to see you about the possible vacancy in your school," the visitor said.

The judge was astonished. Winchendon did not pay high salaries, and for principal it usually chose between young fellows of some ability and little experience, and men of some experience and little ability, in

either case crude and with pedagogue written all over them. But this man, Mr. Bruce as he introduced himself, was a man of the world, well dressed, well groomed, well mannered, such a man as the judge would expect to meet at an exclusive club in Boston or New York. His surprise was so manifest that Mr. Bruce went on easily:

"You are naturally astonished at my looking for a twelve-hundred dollar place. You are quite right; I am not a twelve-hundred dollar man. The last salary I received as a teacher was twenty-three hundred, as principal of the high school in Elizabeth, Montana. Because I taught school pretty well, some people thought I was well adapted for a business man. I thought so, too. The mistake has cost me five years and all my savings. Now I am going back to what I

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know I can do, and of course I must begin with what offers."

It was said frankly and modestly, and made a favorable impression on the judge. "What was the business you went into?" he asked.

Mr. Bruce smiled ruefully. "It will be an old story to you," he said; "the courts are full of such cases; but even we who read the newspapers get taken in, now and then.

"We Montana people usually put our savings into mines. I ran across a new mine, one vacation, that seemed to me promising, and I began to invest in that. It paid well and I put in more; I got some of my friends to put in money; I became rather useful to them, in a small way.

"One June, just before school was out, one of the original owners visited me. He

said he and his partner were plain miners, with no education, no acquaintance with people, no gift of gab. They wanted to raise some money so as to have their own stamping mills and save the heavy freight to Butte. If I would come up to the mine and make myself thoroughly sure the proposition was a good one, they would pay me double my present salary to go east and raise capital.

" It looked all right; it was all right; the men were straight and their mine was a good one. I went east for them and I raised a lot of money, the stamping mills were put up, and the mine did well. My expenses were paid, I was not using much of my own money, and I kept investing everything in the mine.

" It got to be too good a thing. One of the men whom I interested in the mine went out to examine it and bought out the

interest of the original owners, thus getting a majority of the stock. Then he formed a new company with inflated capital, paid enormous salaries to a few officers, and neglected the mine so as to freeze out the other stockholders. Dividends stopped, and assessments took their place. I protested, but in vain, and finally last Monday I told the new president what I thought of him and his proceedings.

"He laughed in my face, proved to me that everything he had done was within the law, and swore that if I took the matter into the newspapers he would sue me for libel, and ruin me financially, whether he won the case or not. For that matter I was ruined financially anyway, for I have been unable to pay the assessments on my stock and have lost it. Of course I threw up my place, and I resolved to get back

among honest men and into honest business without delay. I saw in the Tribune that your principal had been offered the place in the boys high school, and I came on at once, thinking there might be a chance to earn at least my bread and butter."

"Are you married?" asked the judge.

"There you strike a tender spot," said Mr. Bruce, sadly. "My wife and my little boy that never made a sound are buried in one grave."

"I beg your pardon," said the judge hastily; "of course I did not know."

He liked this man. The mining experience was a common one; he knew as few lawyers did how helpless the small stockholder is in the hands of the "kings of finance". That he was ready to start again so humbly and so cheerfully was much in his favor.

Just then Mr. Burbank came in. "I say, judge," he began, "I don't see how we can stand in young Farnsworth's way. The one thing he has fitted himself for is to teach mathematics in a secondary school, and now comes this opening in the boys high school, Brooklyn, at two thousand dollars. It probably won't come to him again in a life-time. And honestly I believe we shall gain by the change if we take Mr. Bruce."

The judge was willing to be convinced. "Have you credentials?" he asked Mr. Bruce.

"If you mean testimonials," was the reply, "I never had one in my life. You see the principal of the normal school sent me the day I graduated to Red Bow, Montana; I staid there two years, and the board at Long Sweep elected me without my making an application. Then the Elizabeth su-

perintendent visited my school and offered me the principalship of a ward school there, from which I was promoted to the high school. I have never before had to ask for a place, so of course I have never needed testimonials, and I have none. But I can give you plenty of references. I might refer you to the president of the mining company," he said, with an amused twinkle in his eye. "Honestly, I should rather like to have you write to him; I should like to see how he would express himself. If he had written it right after our interview the paper would have caught fire from the ink.

"I'll tell you, gentlemen," he continued more seriously, "suppose you write to the present superintendent at Elizabeth, John H. Squires. He was not there when I was, but he knows of my work. And Henry Ames, a banker there, is probably still on

the board. He knows me very well. Or better still—you don't want to wait a week to get replies—telegraph them at my expense;" and Mr. Bruce took out a twenty-dollar bill and laid it on the judge's desk.

The judge and Mr. Burbank looked at each other and nodded. "We won't put you to that outlay," the judge said, handing him back the bill. "Mr. Burbank will Write to these men, and in the mean time we will take you on trust. You can begin to-morrow morning."

The judge wrote out the names and handed the paper to Mr. Burbank, who put it in his waistcoat pocket.

"I thank you, gentlemen," said Mr. Bruce simply; "I will try not to disappoint you."

II

Mr. Bruce did not disappoint them.

Never did man get complete control of a school in shorter time. He had spent the remainder of the day in the building, picking up all the points he could from the present principal, and becoming acquainted with the other teachers and some of the pupils, so that he began work with much already accomplished. His presence convinced the boys from the start that he was probably master of the situation, but some of the boldest thought it would be unworthy of them to yield without experiment.

While he was hearing a class in arithmetic at the blackboard, the first hour, a spitball flew past his head and spread itself out on the glass over a portrait of Lincoln. Apparently he did not notice it, and the boy was just about to blow another when, the class having been dismissed, Mr. Bruce said, as if he were asking what time it was,

"Jones, will you bring that blow-gun here?"

Jones came forward in a shame-faced way, astonished that Mr. Bruce should have known not only that he blew the spit-ball but what his name was. Mr. Bruce took the blow-pipe and examined it curiously. "That's a very well-made one," he said, critically; "where do you get them? at the tin-shop?"

"Yes, sir," replied the boy.

"What do you have to pay for them?"

"Five cents."

"The man must make a good many of them to sell as good a one as that for five cents. How many do you suppose there are in the school?"

"I don't know, sir; a good many."

"They are much better than we used to have when I was a boy. Then we had to

make them out of willow bark, the same as we used for whistles. I suppose boys have always used blow-guns in school. I have no doubt that some of those picture scenes at Herculaneum and on the walls of the kings tombs in Egypt show schoolboys blowing spit-balls or something similar when the teacher is not looking. But of course that sort of thing is done only to experiment on inexperienced teachers. You won't need to try it again on me because I am not an inexperienced teacher. The spit-ball does not ornament the portrait of Lincoln, does it? You will see that it is washed off at recess and the glass carefully polished, won't you? Thank you. Here is your blow-gun. Don't bring it to school again, please, and suggest to the other boys that they leave theirs at home."

This is substantially what Mr. Bruce

said, but in type it gives no appreciation of the way he said it, in perfectly friendly tone and with only the suggestion of disapproval, and yet with such a manifest knowledge of boys and boys' ways that the conviction at once spread over the school it would be of no use to try to deceive him.

In recitation too he seized an early opportunity to establish the right relations. In a large geography class a girl who was called up among the last floundered so hopelessly that it was manifest she had made no preparation. He kept her upon her feet till she became embarrassed and then asked, "You came in without looking at the lesson to-day, didn't you, Miss Snow?"

"Yes, Mr. Bruce," she said, blushing.

"And if you had not been called upon you would have kept it secret that you were not prepared?"

"Why, of course."

"Now really neither you nor I can afford that. If the recitation is to be given up to detecting who have not learned their lessons there will be no time for anything else, and it seems to me we can use the hour much more profitably. Let us have an agreement now that whenever any one of you for any reason is not prepared, you will come to me before recitation and say so. The reason may be good and may not be, but at least we shall be frank and open with one another, and then we can give all our energy to making the recitation as profitable as possible."

Mr. Bruce was as good as his word; the recitations were very profitable; it might fairly be said that the pupils usually heard the bell for changing classes with regret. It was not that he poured out information

upon them, though he abounded in illustrations and experiences that were always interesting; but the especial charm was the way he correlated the lesson with their own experiences, till in what had seemed to them abstract and dry he would sometimes have half the class shaking their arms in air, eager to tell what they had done or thought.

Mr. Bruce was never hurried; if a line of thought was proving profitable he gave the whole recitation hour to it, without regard to the rest of the lesson; and almost always the pupils went home from school thinking. The village library soon felt the influence. Instead of drawing now and then a story-book, the scholars spent hours over reference books, and were continually calling for works on science and biography and history. The discussions reached the dinner-table, and parents who

met Mr. Bruce on the street would complain whimsically but with manifest pride that their children left them no peace, but wanted to know everything that was in the heavens above or the earth beneath or the waters under the earth.

But Mr. Bruce was more than an instructor; he was continually studying his boys and girls and giving them unobtrusively little suggestions that were of inestimable value. If a girl was inclined to stoop, as so many growing girls are, he would find a time when she happened to be sitting erect and tell her how much difference it made in her appearance; in fact, that the French, who study appearance, ask, not how do you do, but how do you carry yourself, as if that were the whole matter.

To another, inclined to be hoydenish and familiar with the boys, he told of two girls

who met after a party in the dressing-room and congratulated each other that they were the only girls there who had not been handled; and he pointed out how one could be easy and unaffected and yet feel it was undignified to be pulled and hauled about by boys.

"I saw your mother's picture when I was at your house the other night," he said; "she must have been a lovely woman. I can hardly imagine her when she was almost grown up letting half the boys in school put their hands on her familiarly and call her Mayme. You are worthy of better things, Mary."

It was not that he preached at his pupils, or interfered unnecessarily, or nagged. He never offered a criticism without manifest reluctance and what the pupil felt to be sufficient reason. He was helped to speak

successfully because he saw so much of the pupils at their homes. He had quite the way of calling about, and his landlady complained that he hardly ever took tea with her. He was an interesting guest because he liked to talk with parents about their children, he showed parents that he knew their children, their weak points and their strong; and that he was doing his best not only for the school but for Henry and Fanny individually.

Besides, he was a pleasant man in society. In his manner toward his school girls, his teachers, and all women there was a courtly deference that gratified them and made itself felt in the community. He was always ready to help and he never tried to lead. He had a good baritone voice and added much to every chorus, but he could not be induced to sing a solo. "I know my limi-

tations," he would protest modestly, and nothing could swerve him; but he would listen to solos unwearied, and when he praised, he praised intelligently.

He was too ready to respond to subscription lists; people were almost ashamed to ask him. No sooner was a good cause mentioned than his name was down and the money paid on the spot—a feature that adds wonderfully to the impressiveness of charity.

He was a constant attendant at the Baptist church, where the young pastor, an earnest and sincere man, got into the habit of calling for Mr. Bruce and going off for a long walk every Monday. It helped the preacher to talk over yesterday's sermon with the principal. He tried to persuade Mr. Bruce to join the church, but to that Mr. Bruce demurred. "I have lived so long in rough communities," he said, "and

I have seen so much sanctimoniousness, that I should have to feel very, very sure in my own mind that I saw the light." But there was no work in church or Sunday school within the scope of an outsider that he did not hasten to do when it was suggested.

"A very useful man in the community," was the universal verdict.

III

A special board meeting had been called on the last Friday in May, and after the immediate matters had been disposed of there was some discussion as to teachers for next year.

"Of course we can't expect to retain Mr. Bruce at twelve hundred dollars," said Judge Fellows, "and the question is how much more we are justified in offering him."

Several members had expressed themselves

ready to propose a considerable advance; pupils, teachers, parents all were delighted with the present management, and would not complain of a slightly higher school tax.

"Why look at the confidence this community feels in him," said Mr. Nutting, enthusiastically. "He came in to-day and wanted to borrow two hundred dollars. I not only gave it to him but I wouldn't even take a receipt for it."

The others nodded approvingly but under his heavy eyebrows Judge Fellows's eyes lit up with a little surprise. However he only said: "Well, gentlemen, we won't cross the bridge till we get to it. In the absence of Mr. Burbank, chairman of the teachers committee, we couldn't take action to-night anyway, so if there is no further business we may as well adjourn."

He walked down the street with Mr. Nut-

ting, and after some careless chat asked, "How did Mr. Bruce come to want two hundred dollars?"

"O as usual for somebody else," replied Mr. Nutting. "He is the most unselfish man I ever knew. It seems his landlady, Mrs. Hartwell, had a mortgage coming due yesterday, and she did not get in some money she had expected to pay it. Bruce had three hundred dollars saved up, and with the two hundred I let him have she paid the mortgage. He is going to pay me one hundred dollars out of this month's pay to-morrow, and the other hundred a month from to-morrow. His personal expenses are very light, and he has enough on hand for them, so Mrs. Hartwell can take her time. Did you ever see a man so ready to sacrifice himself for others?"

"He is indeed on the lookout for every-

one," said the judge, reflectively. "I must turn here; good night."

Mrs. Hartwell was the widow of a friend of Judge Fellows and the judge had always taken care of her financial matters. He knew there were no mortgages on her property, and he was much concerned over what might be the effect of some advice he had recently given her. He went to the house, apologized for calling so late, and said, "By the way, Mrs. Hartwell, I have changed my mind about your selling that Sea Shore stock. You would make a clear five hundred and the present price seems abnormally high, and yet I am inclined to think you had better keep it."

"Why, I have already sold it," said Mrs. Hartwell.

"Sold it?" The judge's tone expressed

surprise; this was the first transaction she had ever made except through him.

"Yes; I was talking with Mr. Bruce about it and he said you were entirely right; that a hundred and eighty for four per cent stock was ridiculous. Besides, he happened to know of a six per cent real estate first mortgage on Boston property, and he has gone there to get that for me. It is a two-thousand dollar mortgage, but he is going to lend me the difference and let me pay him out of the interest."

"I see," said the judge. "Did you sell the stock here?"

"Yes, the First National bank took it to-day."

"In what form did they pay you?"

"A Boston draft; but afterward I changed it to bills, because Mr. Bruce said the people who owned the mortgage were old-fash-

ioned and did not like to take checks and drafts."

"Mr. Bruce has gone to Boston, I suppose?"

"Yes, he went on the four-o'clock train."

"Very obliging man, Mr. Bruce. How well your nasturtiums are looking, Mrs. Hartwell; I noticed them as I came by this morning."

On his way to his office one of the teachers met him. "I am so glad I saw you," she said; "will you lend me twenty dollars?"

"Why, certainly," replied the judge, taking out his pocket-book; "but weren't you paid off to-day?"

"Yes, but you know Mr. Bruce always takes our checks to the bank and brings back the money to us at the schoolhouse, which saves us lots of trouble. To-day

just as he was coming out of the bank he got a telegram calling him to Boston, and barely caught the train. So we shan't get our money till Monday."

"O well, I am very glad to lend it to you," said the judge.

He went on to his office and called up the station agent.

"Did Mr. Bruce go away this afternoon?"

"Yes; he took the four o'clock train."

"Did he say where he was going? I want to communicate with him."

"He called for a ticket for Boston, but the train was drawing out and he jumped on board without it."

The judge called up the chief of police, Boston.

"This is Judge Fellows. Yes. Thank you. It is about a confidence man, been

teaching school here, became well established, suddenly got hold of a lot of money, and lit out. He took the four o'clock train and said he was going to Boston; pretty sure sign he wasn't, but I thought I would call you up. Forty years old, five feet nine, a hundred and eighty, smooth face except for silky black mustache, hair black and straight, smug appearance, well dressed, dark mixed suit, black derby; looks like a well-to-do club man. Thank you. I don't expect you to find him, but if you do call me up. Don't under any circumstances let the newspapers get hold of it."

Then he called up the chief of police, New York.

"This is Judge Fellows. Yes. Yes, I remember. O is that you, Rafferty? I recognize your voice now; glad you happen to be on duty. I never had a case brought

before me in better shape; you had taken care that every link of the evidence was ready when wanted.

" O well, this is not nearly so important a matter; it is only a confidence man who has got away with a few thousand dollars, but of course we should like to nab him if we can. Thank you.

" He went on the four o'clock this afternoon, saying he was going to Boston. Probably he caught the Empire State at Albany and went to New York. You might telephone up to the station and see if any of your men happened to observe him.

" Very good looking, like a prosperous real estate or insurance man, medium height, moderately heavy build, dark clothes, white linen, black derby hat, black straight hair just a little long, silky black mustache, cheerful expression, good manners.

"Yes. Yes, it is very characteristic of him. You don't say so! For forgery! Well, well; and I have been on the bench twenty-two years and hired him for a teacher. It ought to keep me modest. Well, nab him if you can. Above all, don't let a word of it get into the newspapers."

IV

About eleven the next morning Judge Fellows called on Mr. Burbank.

"Burbank, have you five thousand dollars you don't know what to do with?"

"No; but if you want it I have five thousand dollars I do know what to do with;" and he reached for his check-book.

"I don't think it will require quite all of it, but it will cut out a good slice of it."

"What is it?"

"Bruce is a scoundrel; he has absconded with some thousands of dollars."

"Bruce an absconder! How did you discover it?"

"At the board meeting last night Nutting happened to mention that Bruce had just borrowed two hundred dollars of him. He had borrowed the same amount of me that day."

"And of me too."

"I thought likely. So I changed the subject, adjourned the meeting, and walked down the street with Nutting. I chatted a little on common-places, and then asked him how Bruce came to be in need of money. I found Bruce had pretended Mrs. Hartwell needed it.

"I got away from him as soon as I could and hurried to Mrs. Hartwell's, troubled because I had lately advised her to sell some Sea Shore stock. I was too late; she had sold it and given the proceeds, some eigh-

teen hundred dollars, to Bruce, in currency. Then I found he had taken the teachers checks to the bank and gone off with their money."

"Anybody else?"

"Yes, the Baptist minister; eight hundred dollars."

"Eight hundred! Where did he get that much?"

"It seems in college he had a scholarship of two hundred a year. He has always regarded that money as a loan, and has saved up the money to repay it as an addition to that particular fund. He had confided in Bruce, who applauded his sentiment and offered to take the money directly to the treasurer of Harvard."

"And the minister gave it to him! What fools we mortals be."

"I don't think the minister is to be

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blamed. You and I introduced the man here as worthy to be principal of our school. We were supposed to know him, and we are responsible for him. The only thing I see for us to do is to make all this money good and keep the thing quiet. I have been president of this board seventeen years; you have been chairman of the teachers committee nearly as long; I take it we can better afford to put up three or four thousand apiece than to have it known we are so little to be trusted. For my part, I think we are lucky that it is only in money matters he has proved unworthy. I called up the police and find he is well known to them; he has served a term for forgery.

"By the way, did you write to the fellow's references?"

Mr. Burbank looked blank and then reflective. Instinctively he had put his thumb

and index finger into his right waistcoat pocket. "Wait a minute," he said; and presently he came back with a fancy waistcoat. He felt in the right lower pocket and took out a piece of paper; it was that on which the judge had written the names of the men to whom Mr. Bruce had referred.

"You see how it was," Mr. Burbank said; "I never try to carry anything in my mind; I always make a memorandum and put it in my vest pocket. I remember now that the day we hired Bruce it suddenly turned cold in the afternoon. I changed this summer vest for a thicker one without looking in the pocket, and I haven't worn it since.

"See here, judge, I will straighten up these accounts myself; I am the one who is responsible."

"O no," said the judge, "it must be

share and share alike. I am not a millionaire like you, but I have never yet shirked my share and I am not going to begin now. You probably would have got no replies if you had written, and would have forgotten all about it. What a magnificent bluff that was of the twenty-dollar bill for telegrams.

"Now this is what I propose. In the first place we must have a man here Monday to take Bruce's place. We will call up Appleton by telephone and leave it to him. Let him use the long-distance telephone all day to-morrow if necessary, at our expense, but let him get a good man here; we won't limit him as to salary for this last month."

"That is a good idea."

"Then the first thing Monday morning we will have a bank messenger take over to the schoolhouse the amount of the salaries, and the teachers will understand that as

soon as Mr. Bruce found he could not return he sent the money back to the bank."

"That is right."

"Then I will send a draft to a friend of mine in Boston and have him pay over the eight hundred dollars to the treasurer of Harvard, and have the treasurer send receipt direct to the Baptist minister."

"Of course."

"Then we will pay up Nutting and anybody else we find he victimized. As for the mortgage, I am in luck. In making an exchange of property in Boston, I got hold of a dwelling-house on which there were two mortgages, a savings-bank mortgage, which I have already paid, and a second mortgage for two thousand dollars which had been paid, but for which the owner instead of cancelling it, had taken from the mortgagee an assignment in blank, think-

ing he might want to borrow the money again. This assignment of course I have. I have only to fill the blank with her name and hand it to her, and she will be sure Bruce did just what he promised to."

"And you pay up a four per cent mortgage, and let a six per cent mortgage on the same property run indefinitely?"

"O it is only a matter of forty dollars a year difference, and Hartwell was a mighty good friend of mine; that is all right."

"It is all right, but half that forty dollars a year is mine."

All these plans were carried out. Mr. Bruce was never heard of again in Winchendon. It was understood that the telegram which took him away summoned him to Europe, and only two men there know that the eulogistic remembrances of Mr. Bruce are not wholly deserved. They are still

president of the board and chairman of the teachers committee respectively, but just at present they are not hiring teachers without credentials.

JOT, THE JANITOR

JOT, THE JANITOR

Thirty-four years, sir, altogether; that is, I have been regularly appointed that long, but as a matter of fact I have done the work more or less for more than fifty years. My father was janitor before me, and the earliest thing I remember was coming to the school with him, holding his big finger in my little hand. Then I began to help more or less, and in his last years I did most of the work, so really I am as you say a veteran.

Not the same building? Well, I should say not, sir. I have seen three buildings on this very site. Fifty years ago we had just a plain two-story wooden schoolhouse, with

wooden benches, and eight wood stoves, one for each room. Many a time my back has ached carrying wood up those stairs.

In 1865 we put up a brick building, and proud we were of it. A picture of it and all the floor plans were put into Barnard's American Journal of Education. It was three stories high, and had cherry desks with iron standards, and chairs to match. It was heated by a Culver furnace, set in the cellar in double walls of brick masonry, drawing in and heating the cold air from the outside, and sending it into every room by registers. People came from miles around to see that furnace, and father was very proud to explain how it worked.

But it gave us lots of trouble. At first we had poor coal, that used to slag; we used to take turns getting up nights to rake it down; even then it went out sometimes.

Then the old teachers that used to be in the other building complained of the air; they said the life was burned out of it. They would open the windows, but that would let cold air on the heads of the children, and altogether that furnace made our lives a burden.

Then came the big fire, in 1872. Father was dead then and I was janitor. I was one of the first to hear the alarm, and I worked all night, first trying to save the buildings farther down the street, then trying to save the schoolhouse, then trying to save all I could out of the schoolhouse. I did get out most of the teachers' books and some of the best apparatus, and I was in bed for a fortnight afterward; but the schoolhouse went—even the walls had to come down.

Then the board put up this building,

with steam heating by indirect radiation, and a good building it is. I know every inch of it, and I see every foot of it every day I live.

I understand that in some of the later big buildings the janitors put on a good many airs. Somebody told me the janitor in the new high school at Pepperell called himself custodian, went around in a Prince Albert coat, and the first time there was snow telephoned down to the superintendent's office to have a man sent up to shovel the walks. Father wasn't that kind of a janitor, and if I had been inclined to be he would have thrashed it out of me. There has never a bushel of coal gone into this building that I haven't shovelled in myself. I won't even have it put in with a chute. I want to see the coal I use, and more than one load has gone back to the yard because

it wasn't up to the standard. I would rather shovel coal into the bin than slag out of the furnace.

O yes, sir, there have been a good many principals here in those fifty years, and a great variety too. As for teachers, there have been hundreds.

Bad to have so many changes? I don't know, sir. As a matter of fact the teachers don't make so very much difference in a school. If you have the right janitor, who keeps the temperature even and the air fresh and everything neat, the school will be all right. The best of what children learn in school doesn't come out of books.

Children of my own, sir? O no. I never married. Wanted to? Why, not to say so, sir. There was only one, and she was so far away it would be as though you

longed for the Princess of Wales, or the evening star.

Well, sir, it was like this. One first Monday in September, twenty-four years ago last month, I was as usual running my eye over the new pupils and the new teachers, to see what sort of material we were going to have, when up came a little body who might be either a pupil or a teacher; I couldn't tell which she was. She didn't seem to know anyone, and she looked about in a scared sort of way, uncertain where to go. When she saw me she came up to me after a little hesitation and asked:

"Can you direct me to the principal's room?"

From the way she spoke I knew she was a teacher, and of course I lifted my cap to her and offered to conduct her.

I tell you I was sorry for her. We had

at that time a real brute for principal, Mr. Harder. We have had principals with bad manners, and principals that were rough spoken; our principal now used to be that way till he married. But then those other men had kind enough hearts when you got at them, and as a rule I have found that outspoken men are square.

But Mr. Harder wasn't square, and I don't believe he had any heart at all. Why, you won't believe it, but once that man threw a kitten out of a third-story window. We had been troubled with mice—some of the children carried lunches and there would be crumbs in the desks—so I brought this kitten to school. It was the most trustful little thing; it came right from my boarding-place, where its mother was a pet, and the children here just loved it, so it saw a friend in everybody.

One morning when I came to school, that kitten, which had always run up to me and rubbed itself against my leg, shrank away in a corner shivering-scared at my approach. Then I knew that somebody had abused it, and I wondered who in the building had a heart black enough to be willing to destroy that poor little animal's trust in human nature.

I determined to find out, and I did find out. It was Mr. Harder. He had come across it on the landing and kicked it down the stairs, and then coming up to it where it lay shuddering he had kicked it again, way across the hall; one of the boys saw him and told me.

Well, he and I had some words about that. I told him the kitten was my kitten, and was necessary there, and had a right to decent treatment there. He said he was

principal of the school and had charge of the building, and was the only judge of what it was proper for him to do. When I began to say some more he threatened to report me to the board for insubordination, and I told him if he did I would report him at the same meeting for abuse of a dumb animal, and for setting an example before the boy who saw him that all the teaching he could do would never make up for. It ended in a drawn game, for we neither reported the other, but he hated me and the kitten.

I did my best to keep the kitten out of his way, but one day it wandered up to his class-room. He was giving a demonstration on the blackboard, and noticed that something was distracting the attention of the class. He turned around and saw this kitten. His scholars said his eyes actually

glared as he grabbed it and threw it with all his strength right through the open window. The girls screamed and two of them fainted. As for the boys, some of them ran to the window and reported that it had fallen on the brick sidewalk and seemed to be dead, and all of them looked ugly. There was pretty close to a rebellion then and there; I only wonder they didn't chuck him out of the window after the kitten.

It got into the newspapers and finally resulted in his dismissal, but at the time I speak of he was still here, and I had thought this very morning that he was if possible uglier-tempered than ever. So I was sorry enough for this poor little creature I was taking to him, who seemed to be making her first venture out from a loving home into a hard-hearted world.

"If you will give me your name I will introduce you," I said.

"Thank you; I am Miss Rulison," she replied. "I am to have the third grade."

I introduced her to Mr. Harder, who browbeat her as usual, snorted his anger when he found she had had no experience, declared that she was sure to fail, and told me to show her to her room.

"Is he always like that?" she asked in terror, as we walked down the hall.

"Well, he isn't angelic, miss," I admitted, "but you never mind; you will find plenty of good friends here."

"O thank you," she said. "I am sure I shall find you one." And although she knew that I was the janitor she held out her hand to me, and shook hands—not condescendingly, but with a good grip, just as you shake hands with a friend you are glad

to see. And then she asked, "Will you tell me your name?"

You could have knocked me over with a feather. No teacher ever asked me my name before; it was always, "Janitor, can you give me a little more heat?", "See here, janitor, my room hasn't been swept out since Tuesday," and so on. Mr. Harder used to call me and speak of me as "Jot", but then that was because it made me seem a servant rather than an official. When there were visitors and he felt ferociously funny he would call out to me, "Here, Jot or Tittle, whatever your name is, fetch another chair."

But Miss Rulison wanted to know my name, so as to call me by it; and she always did call me "Mr. Jot". It isn't much of a name, sir, but if you could hear

her speak it you wouldn't swap it for an English title.

From that first day Miss Rulison and I were allies. She knew I would stand by her in any emergency, and I knew that every morning her little hand would give mine a firm shake, and her sweet eyes would look into mine straight and trustful.

I wasn't so sure of the afternoons. It was a hard term for her, and often after school was out I found her still at her desk her head bowed upon her hands. She was never troubled to have me see her so, for she used to confide in me, and often when she seemed almost ready to give up I could find something to say that encouraged her.

One night I was kept in another part of the building later than usual, and as I started for her room I saw Mr. Harder com-

ing out with such an exultant face I felt sure he had been abusing her. I did not get to her any too soon. She was desperate. She would not tell me what Mr. Harder had said, but she declared it was impossible for her to enter the building again. For a time her indignation had the upper hand, but presently it gave way to grief, she began to cry, and—well, sir, you probably won't believe it, but she threw her arms around my neck and sobbed on my shoulder. It was my working blouse I had on, sir, an old, worn-out coat; but ever since that day that blouse has been wrapped up and locked away, and when I am dead they will find I have left just one direction about my funeral, that in my coffin I wear that blouse.

O of course it wasn't the same to her it was to me. Why, she said herself between

her sobs, "Some way you seem more like a father to me than anyone else, now that mine is gone." Not that I really was so much older. I was thirty-six then, and she was twenty-two; you see I couldn't have been her father. But then that was the way it seemed to her, and of course I never tried to change it.

And then there couldn't have been anything between us, you know. She was born and bred a lady to the finger-tips, and I never took much to schooling; did not even get into the high school. Of course I have always tried to correct my language by the teachers', so as to set a good example before the children, but I could always work better with my hands than with my brains.

I experimented some. I knew Miss Rulison was literary, and I had read none of her kind of books. So I went to a book-

store in Ipswich (I didn't want to do it at home), and I asked the clerk to show me some way bang-up literature, the top notch. He handed me Milton's poems, and told me there was nothing higher up. I asked him if literary people would know that book, and he said yes, by heart.

So I bought it, and I read Paradise Lost clear through. It came hard, and when I got to the end I doubted whether Adam's and Eve's steps were any more wandering and slow than mine had been. But I wanted to see whether I had any literary taste or could get any, and I did find some places that I could understand, and some lines I had heard before.

I began to try these on Miss Rulison, to see if she would recognize me as being literary too. One day I remarked, sort of thrown-in like, " ' Better to reign in Hell

than serve in Heaven,' as Milton says." Miss Rulison lifted her eyebrows a little, but made no reply. Another time I asked, "Do you remember where Milton says in Paradise Lost:

'How beauty is excelled by manly grace
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair'?"

"I never read a line of Paradise Lost," she replied with an amused smile; and then I knew it was useless for me to try to get into her class. As a janitor I was a success, but if I tried to be literary I should only be laughed at.

However, she still gave me her good firm grip every morning, and still her eyes looked trustfully straight into mine; why should I dream of more? Yet more came to me; what an exulting delight it is to recall how it came to me.

Near the end of the term one afternoon

I noticed Mr. Harder making a tour of the rooms. He had on his ugliest face, and I hoped he would keep away from Miss Rulison, especially as I had observed in the morning that she was not looking as well as usual.

Luckily he found so much to growl about in the upper rooms that school was dismissed before he got to the third grade, and I breathed a sigh of relief. I hung about, however, and noticed that when Miss Rulison started home he followed her. I got on my overcoat in a hurry, and followed too. It was December and dark, so I kept within hearing of them without being seen; in fact, his voice was so loud and rough he could be heard a good ways off. As I feared, he was declaring her work an utter failure; assuring her she was the weakest teacher in school, with no natural adapta-

tion; and he finally advied her to give up the work and marry.

She had replied with weariness but patiently until that last suggestion.

"It is within your province to advise me about my school work," she said, "but not about my private affairs."

"But suppose I make your private affairs mine," he said; "suppose I marry you myself?"

I dug my finger nails into my palms and managed to hold back. So this was what the coarse old bully had been leering at her for. Miss Rulison gave him a glance that ought to have petrified him, and said:

"The conversation stops here, Mr. Harder. Good night."

"It doesn't stop here," he said, grabbing her by the wrist. "It doesn't stop until I get ready to have it stop. You are in my

power. You have no money and no friends, and you have got to either teach or marry. If I declare you a failure as a teacher, you must marry, and you had better take me while you can get me."

"Release me, sir," she said, trying to pull away her wrist.

"Not by a d—d sight," he said.

You will wonder how I could have held in so long, but O how my fist shot out and how snug these knuckles landed on his right eye. He screamed like a baby, and when he saw who I was he trembled with rage and rushed at me to annihilate me, I being so much smaller and the janitor. However, like all bullies he was cowardly and couldn't stand pain, so inside of a minute a blow under the chin sent him sprawling.

"Now, Miss Rulison," I said, "if you will let me I will walk home with you."

Out came that little hand for a warmer shake than ever, and then it nestled trustfully in my arm. So I saw her home, and when we got to the door she said to me:

"Mr. Jot, you are the best friend a girl ever had."

Then—well, sir, you may not believe it, but she threw her arms around me and kissed me; kissed me, the janitor; kissed me on the lips. It made me feel as if it would be a joy to fight the whole world for her

Is she still here? O no, sir; her kind don't teach long. She was married the next June to a young physician from Brooklyn who visited here that winter. I saw him; he was literary, tall, manly, on the 'varsity foot-ball team people said; probably deserved his luck. No, sir, I haven't seen her since.

A Masterful Man

A MASTERFUL MAN

I.

"O girls, we are going to have another hard day," sighed Miss Lewis, coming back from the window to the group of teachers standing by the radiator in the A grammar room; "he's walking fast, and his hat is tipped forward."

"I hope he will keep out of my room," said Miss Andrus; "everything has gone wrong this week, and if he comes in and scolds I shall just break down."

"I knew this would be one of his cross days," said Miss Ferret, in whose sharp profile the nose turned up just a little at the tip; "all Tuesdays are cross days."

"Why?" asked two or three of the others, in chorus.

"O," said Miss Ferret with a smirk, "I found out that at his boarding-house they have buckwheat cakes on Tuesday morning. He always eats too many of them and they don't agree with him."

"Can't you get Mrs. Bacon to stop having them?" asked Miss Timrod; "he is hard enough to teach under when his digestion is normal."

By this time Mr. Rollins had reached his office. As he unlocked the door his first assistant, a tired-looking woman, came up and said:

"Miss Avery is down sick at last. She won't be able to come back this term."

"This is very unfortunate," said Mr. Rollins; "her room is behind now, and to

put a new teacher in there five weeks before examination means failure."

"She probably did not break down maliciously," said Miss Marshall, with a tinge of sarcasm. "She should not have been here yesterday; when she went home she looked as if she ought to be in bed. Her mother sent for the doctor and he telephoned half an hour ago that it would be quite out of the question for her to teach before next term; she is threatened with typhoid fever."

"Did you telephone for a substitute?"

"I did. She is here now, in my room. Shall I bring her to you?"

"Yes."

When Miss Marshall brought in Miss May, Mr. Rollins scowled at her.

"You don't weigh a hundred pounds," he said; "couldn't the superintendent send us somebody grown up?"

"I weigh a hundred and two," she replied with dignity, "and I am full-grown."

"Well, you don't look it," he said crossly. "Ever taught?"

"Yes; in Elizabeth, Montana."

"Are the schools graded there?"

Miss May's eyebrows lifted a little; the ward schools there had been much larger and better equipped than this. But she only replied, "Yes, Mr. Rollins."

"What grade did you have?"

"The grammar grades."

"You will have 8th grade here, and I warn you it is a hard room. The teacher has not been well this term, and the new class has been running away with her."

"I shall do my best with them."

"Yes, but they will pick you up and chuck you out of the window. Well, it can't be helped now; we've got to begin

with somebody. Miss Marshall will show you the room."

II

About eleven o'clock Mr. Rollins strolled into the 8th grade room. The period was in American history, and Miss May after telling them that the fort spoken of in the lesson had been within walking distance of the schoolhouse had been asking how many of the pupils knew the location, why the fort was built there, what were some of the events that occurred there, and so on, connecting the background of the day's lesson so closely with what they themselves had seen and known that they were all eagerly intent.

As Mr. Rollins came in she was telling a most exciting story of Indian capture and rescue, so exciting that the pupils hardly noticed Mr. Rollins's entrance. Perhaps it

was partly on this account that he listened disapprovingly. Miss May continued her story, and presently he went away without speaking.

But after the pupils were dismissed he stepped into her room on his way down stairs.

"Miss May," he said, "I see you have still to learn the first principle of teaching."

"And that is?"

"That teaching is measured not by what you tell your pupils but by what they tell you."

"Are you sure they cannot tell me a good part of what I told them?"

Mr. Rollins stared at her; he was not accustomed to have his teachers answer back.

"It wouldn't make any difference whether they could repeat those cock-and-bull stories or not. Such stories are not given in

the regents examinations. You are here to see that they know the history as it is laid down in the book."

"But I found the history as laid down in the book, and a very poor book you use here, had no interest for them; so I tried to correlate it with something that had interest. I think you will find that they will pass an examination on the lesson as well as on my cock-and-bull stories."

Mr. Rollins was ready to choke; this snip of a girl was actually defying him. He put on his most impressive air. "Do you know the meaning of the word *education?*" he asked.

"I know that hardly any two authorities agree upon a definition," she said.

"It comes from *educere, e,* out and *ducere,* to draw, to draw out," he said. "You are not to pour information into pupils; you are to draw it out of them."

Miss May smiled quietly, and exasperatingly. "Isn't there a difference of opinion about that derivation?" she asked. "Doesn't the *ducere* mean rather to lead, to train? Of course originally there is not much information in children's minds to draw out; in fact, a child's mind is mainly an interrogation point. But by giving them the right information we may interest them to go on and get further information for themselves."

"We can't stop to argue at dinner-time," said Mr Rollins retiring with further marks of disapproval. Miss May must have got her surface arguments out of some teacher's journal. He hated teacher's journals. If he were examining teachers for a license, his first question should be, "Do you take an educational journal?", and he would license all who didn't.

As for Miss May, he simply detested her.

III

John Rollins prided himself on being a masterful man. He could be that without much effort, without overcoming a certain shyness that it was easy to conceal by bullying. So his manner every year grew more and more brusque, his voice harsher; he even affected clothing of coarse texture and rough surface. He liked Browning's lines:

> The better the uncouther;
> Do roses stick like burrs?

Marriage might have modified him, but till recently that had been impossible. His younger brother Ned (only they two were left of the family) had married imprudently, had struggled along with a rapidly increasing family, and had depended on John. John had been disagreeable to Ned, and was cordially hated by Ned's shiftless wife,

but he had paid out half his salary to keep Ned's family from starving. Fortunately Ned's business had prospered, and he was now independent of John. But John had been called a crusty old bachelor so long that he considered single-blessedness an integral part of his character, and he had no thought of marriage. Now that he was saving money he contemplated perhaps endowing a library to build up a collection in some speciality, or possibly establishing somewhere a scholarship for poor boys.

He was not so thoughtless of others as he seemed. Miss Marshall had been shocked that the news of Miss Avery's break-down elicited only regret for the harm to her room. But as a matter of fact Mr. Rollins had called on Miss Avery after school, and said: "Miss Avery, you ought to be ashamed of neglecting yourself so. Don't

hurry back. You just lie here quietly. Don't you dare come back till you are thoroughly well. We will take good care of your room, and it will be waiting for you when you return, whether it is four weeks or four months."

It was just what Miss Avery wanted to hear; it did her more good than all the doctor's medicine. Yet it was somehow said ungraciously; a person in the next room hearing the voice without distinguishing the words would have thought he was scolding her. Even her mother, who stood by the bedside, wondered that he could not speak more humanly.

The fact is, all these years John Rollins had been repressing his kindly instincts. To all of us there is continually appearing the opportunity to say and do little things that might make others happier. Every

time we follow the suggestion, the suggestion next time is stronger. Every time we neglect it, next time the impulse is weaker. For the ten earliest years of his full manhood, John Rollins had said to himself, "That is not the sort of thing for a masterful man," and now he was usually blind to the opportunities.

IV

It disturbed him that Miss May should have questioned his authority, and he resolved to stamp out this insurrection without delay. So he went down to her room the next afternoon, and found her teaching interest.

"I see you are using the 6 per cent method," he said, after the class was dismissed. "In this school we calculate interest by aliquot parts."

"Very well," she said; "if you prefer

that method I will teach it. I see the book gives only the 6 per cent method."

"Yes," he said, "but the aliquot parts method is so much shorter."

"It has never seemed so to me," she replied.

"Why, see," he said, going to the board and working a problem both ways. "There are fewer than two-thirds as many figures by the aliquot part method."

"True," she replied, "of that particular problem, but try this;" and she put another beside it, in which the 6 per cent method was much shorter. Then she pointed out why it was shorter and in what class of problems it must be shorter, and showed by reference to a book of regents problems in arithmetic that this kind of problems prevailed.

Mr. Rollins listened with growing dis-

pleasure. He always kept heavy artillery in reserve, and, cruel as it might seem, he felt that now was the time to use it.

"Miss May," he said, solemnly, "if we were constructing the science of arithmetic this sort of reasoning might be tolerated; principles have to be evolved and to evolve them requires comparison and argument. But fortunately the responsibility of developing this science and the other studies of the curriculum does not devolve upon us; all that is asked of us is to comprehend them and be able to make them clear to others.

"In other words we are to follow authority in interpretation as well as in discipline, and you are here not to argue with me but to follow my instructions. I am a graduate of Hiram college—the college of which the lamented Garfield was president; my di-

ploma is evidence of mental discipline and power of comprehension which cannot be expected of the holder of a third-grade certificate. I can not always stop to explain why a thing is so; it should be enough for you if I tell you it is so. I am to lead; you are to follow."

"I beg your pardon," said Miss May humbly; "I will teach the aliquot part method."

V

That evening his landlady had guests at supper—Mr. and Mrs. Parkhurst, a young clergyman and his wife from a neighboring town.

"By the way," said the lady, "you have a Miss May in your school."

"She is doing substitute work just now," said Mr. Rollins, not too cordially.

"You are lucky to have her, even tem-

porarily. She was a classmate of mine at Vassar, one of the most brilliant girls in college. Then she went to the Teachers college, and carried off the honors there."

"And is teaching here for ten dollars a week?" asked Mr. Rollins incredulously.

"O she went from the Teachers college to Elizabeth, Montana, as supervisor of grammar grades, at a higher salary than yours; but she had to come here for a time on account of some property interests, while an estate is being settled, and being here thought she might as well teach, since she is very fond of it."

"But why didn't she explain who she was?"

"That wouldn't be her way. She said there were no places likely to be open here which a third-grade teacher could not fill; so she passed the ordinary uniform examin-

ations, and never told your superintendent that she was more than an inexperienced country girl. She spends every other Sunday with me, and has told me a great deal about your school."

Mr. Rollins looked at Mrs. Parkhurst searchingly. She was speaking deferently; could it be that Miss May had not revealed what a clumsy and conceited ignoramus he was?

VI

He did not sleep much that night, and the next afternoon at close of school he went into Miss May's room. She was seated at her desk, and rose.

"Please keep your seat," he said, standing on the floor below her desk, and leaning with his elbow upon it. "I want to speak to you at some length, if I may."

"I shall be glad to listen," she said.

"The Parkhursts took supper at Mrs. Bacon's last night."

"Yes, I know. Mrs Bacon invited me to meet them, but I had another engagement."

"Mrs. Parkhurst told me that you were a graduate of Vassar and of the Teachers college, and in Montana had had a salary of sixteen hundred dollars."

"I hope there was some more profitable subject of conversation than my personal history."

"Of course I know what you must think of me after what I said to you yesterday. I don't expect you to change your opinion, but I want you to know that I am aware what your opinion is and how just it is."

"I doubt if you know what my opinion is," said Miss May, in a low tone.

"To you a college education doesn't

mean much. It is one of the things that come naturally into a life like yours, an incident. You went to college as you eat dinner, as a matter of course. But to me it was everything. I am not much now, but if I had not gone to college I should be today as I was before I went, a farm-hand at a dollar a day, sleeping with the other hired men in the attic.

"It was a struggle for me to go through college. That pocket-book of yours there cost more than I spent for food any term I was at Hiram. The first term my chum and I lived on hasty-pudding and molasses; one week we went without the molasses; a year later for two days I had no food at all, and yet I studied and went to recitations."

It was winter and the days were growing short; it was becoming dusk about the desk,

and Miss May's face could hardly be distinguished. But she was glad, for what dropped down unseen from her face upon her hand would have glistened in the sunlight.

"What costs one so much one values. I was never a good scholar; I was poorly prepared, I was always behind my class, I barely got through my final examinations,—very likely sympathy gave me my diploma. At ten years old you had more culture than I shall ever comprehend, not to say possess. And yet my college education is my one achievement. The question is not how little I am with it, but how much less I should have been without it.

"I knew you were teaching on a third-grade certificate, and I supposed you were an ordinary country girl moved into town."

"That shows that I do Vassar little credit," interposed Miss May. "One ought to

be able to show one has had college training without wearing a Phi Beta Kappa pin."

"No," he said, "it only shows that I am not accustomed to distinguish among women. I never in my life talked five minutes with any woman not a farmer's wife or a boarding-house keeper or a teacher."

"It is worth while to be acquainted with women outside those professions," suggested Miss May.

"No doubt, but what is there in me to interest a lady? For instance, everything you wear and have about you is dainty and expensive. I could not make you understand what a wrench it was for me to order a suit of clothes made to order; I had always bought them ready-made. I don't belong in your set, to your kind of people; it isn't my line, so I have had no chance to know women and distinguish among them.

"This accounts for my speaking as I did last night. I was too ignorant to see how different you are from Miss Lewis or Miss Ferret; I was not trying to see whether you were different. I am not making an apology; I was doing the best I knew how. Not to know better was my misfortune. Of course it simply amused you. I am trying to make it clear that I see how just it was you should be amused."

Miss May's voice wavered a little as she said:

"It did not occur to me to be amused, Mr. Rollins."

"Surely you could not be angry at such absurd pretensions?" he urged.

"No, it still less occurred to me to be angry. Mr. Rollins, you really do not know women very well."

"No, I do not know them at all; this is the first time I have wished I did."

"If you knew women, you would know that there are two qualities in men they value above everything else—strength and honesty. You are strong and you are honest—one glance tells that. A woman never ridicules a man who is strong and honest."

"But what must you have thought when I, barely scraped through Hiram, lorded my intellectual supremacy over you, a star at Vassar?"

"What impressed me was how much college meant to you. I wish Vassar meant as much to me."

"But you did not need Vassar as I needed Hiram."

"And I did not get so much from it. I honor you for the steadfastness of purpose that carried you through; it is a record to

be proud of, a basis for a noble and useful life."

"You really do not despise me?"

"I do not know a man whom I respect more."

"But as an educational expert, you must see how lacking I am as a school principal."

"I think you are a very good principal. You are master of the situation; that is the fundamental thing; nobody ever questions who is the head of the school."

"Yes, but I am a tyrant; I should have tyrannized over you if you had been an ordinary teacher."

"That is true; and yet I heard some of your teachers discussing you with the teachers of another school. The other teachers said, 'Our principal never spoke a cross word to us in his life.' And your teachers said, 'No, and he never stood by you if

there was trouble. Mr. Rollins is cross, but you know where to find him, every time.' "

"Thank you, Miss May; I am glad they said that; I hope it is true."

"Then the boys swear by you; they know you are absolutely square, as they say."

"O I never have any trouble with the boys; we are good friends. But to you I must seem such an untrained teacher."

"From the standpoint of pedagogical formulas you are, but some way what you teach sticks. I have been surprised to see how sure your boys are of what they have learned from you."

"My boys get on a good deal better than my girls."

"The girls are afraid of you, which is unfortunate; and your women teachers dare not say their souls are their own,

which is a calamity. Your heart is all right, but your manners need over-hauling."

"O they are hopeless. You must remember I was brought up a farm hand."

"It isn't that; your instincts are true enough; in all this conversation to-night you have shown the thought and the expression of the gentleman. You can be as courtly as you are true. But all the world's a stage, and we are all acting parts; following ideals, often set for us by accident. Your ideal has been the man of rude strength, honest but impatient of conventionalities."

"How did you know that?" he asked quickly.

"Your every movement shows it. You are a conscientious man, trying to do what is right and worthy. You could not go so

far wrong if you had not established for yourself an ideal of unhewn granite."

"It is true. The first term I taught I overheard one of my teachers say of me in awe-struck tones, 'He is such a masterful man.' She meant it for admiration, and it flattered me; it seemed to point out the path I ought to follow, the only path I could follow very far. Since then I have tried to be a masterful man."

"If she had said, as she might just as well have said, 'He is such a thoughtful, considerate man,' and you had tried to live up to that ideal, what a difference it would have made."

"I wish she had said that."

"I say that; I say it now; all your talk to-night shows it. Now let us have a new ideal, no less the man, but more the gentleman."

"Will you help me?"

"With all my heart. You shall give a first manifestation by offering to walk home with me, for it is late."

VII

It was at the close of the first day of the spring term, and the Lincoln school teachers were waiting for the city teachers meeting, to be held in their building at half-past four.

Miss Avery had returned to her room. She had succumbed to typhoid fever, but the siege had been light, and she had not hastened to resumed her work, so she looked rosier and happier than her fellow teachers had ever before seen her.

"It is so good to be back," she said. "I have thought of those scholars ever since I left them, and it is such a delight to be with them again. They have done so

well, too. Miss May must be a fine teacher."

"The best of it," said the first assistant, "is the way she has kept the room loyal to you. The first day she came she told the scholars that boys and girls did not realize how much of herself a teacher gave them; that you had literally worn yourself out for them, and that perhaps they had unintentionally made it harder for you by being thoughtless. 'Now,' she said, 'we all want Miss Avery to get well as soon as possible, don't we?' And indeed they all did, the way she put it. 'Well,' she said, 'every one of you can help her get well. Her thoughts will be here; she will want to know just how every one of you is getting on; I shall go up to see her every week, and tell her about you. Now, if she hears that John Dole has really mastered division of fractions, that Mary Pratt's penmanship is

becoming like copperplate, that Fanny Rowe put on the blackboard the finest map of New York the room has ever seen there; and, best of all, that you children have been so anxious to have her get well and not worry that you have given me no trouble at all, but just helped me make her proud of the room, why fever won't get any hold of her, and thoughts of school will be a constant delight. Then how proud you will be when she comes back.'

"That talk just took with the scholars. It was sound sense, put to them as if Miss May and they were partners in helping out Miss Avery. Really the results have been surprising."

"Miss May did come every week," said Miss Avery, "and she told the little things that made all that had happened real, almost

as if I had been here myself. I wonder who she is."

"Nobody seems to know," said the first assistant. "She boards at the Goddards, but she is always away Saturday and Sunday, and nobody sees her much outside of school. She has certainly earned a permanent appointment, and I hope she gets it."

"She's been awfully good to me," said Miss Avery, tears in her eyes; "but then, so has everybody. Why, girls, you haven't any idea what Mr. Rollins is unless you are sick. He has come to the house two or three times a week; when I was too ill to see him he brought the most delicious oranges; and after I began to sit up he would come and chat for an hour, telling me all about the school, and especially about my own boys and girls."

"Ahem!" coughed Miss Lewis significantly; "apparently something doing."

"Not in the least," said Miss Avery earnestly; "just the opposite; like a comrade, you know, as if we were partners, as if the school were something that belonged to us both together and which I had a right to know about. When I got stronger he almost always brought with him one of my boys or one of my girls, so as to give me the small gossip, he said, that he couldn't pick up. To think that a man so cross in school is so thoughtful and considerate when you are sick."

"But he isn't cross in school any more," said Miss Lewis; "you can't imagine how he has changed. He always bows and says some nice little thing when he passes us, and that harsh voice is all gone."

"He has made life different for all of

us," said the first assistant. "His eyes shine, as if he were happy all the time. One would think he had just fallen in love."

"So he has!"

Everybody turned to look at Miss Ferret, who had been standing on the outside of the circle and listening with a superior smile, and who now spoke for the first time.

"With whom?" Three or four spoke together.

"With Miss May."

"Nonsense," said the first assistant. "He was never with her; he was in her room less than in any other in the building."

"You don't suppose they were silly enough to spoon before the school," said Miss Ferret.

"Where did they, then? He certainly has not called on her at the Goddards'."

"No," said Miss Ferret, sagaciously; "they haven't been advertising their love-

making. But they have made it all the term."

"Where?"

"At Ipswich."

"How do you know?"

"I have a cousin who is a dressmaker there and does work for Mrs. Parkhurst, the minister's wife. Miss May stays there most every week from Friday night to Monday morning."

"Well?"

"Why, after my cousin had told me this I noticed that Mr. Rollins was away a good deal over Sunday, and I began to put two and two together. Finally I spent Sunday in Ipswich myself, and sure enough, into church came Mr. Rollins and Miss May together as close as two peas in a pod. Then I found out he was there most as often as

she was. And the next day after the term closed she wore a diamond ring."

"How you do find out things!" the others cried admiringly.

"Well it is a good match," said the first assistant, "and I'm glad of it. Miss May is a dainty little body, just right for a man so big and burly and bungling, and yet so strong and tender. And she has improved him a lot already, if it really is her doing."

"It certainly is," said Miss Ferret. "'Sh! here comes Mr. Rollins."

"Well, Miss Avery, how did the first day go?" he asked cheerily, nodding pleasantly to the others, and taking her hand.

"Delightfully," she cried. "I can never tell how much I owe to you and to Miss May."

"I am glad you couple our names," he said with serious happiness. "She author-

izes me to tell you that in June our names are to become the same."

"O I am *so* glad," cried Miss Avery; "it was a blessed day when she took my place."

"It *was* a blessed day," said Mr. Rollins, with a simple reverence that brought tears even to the eyes of Miss Ferret.

Years after that astute observer remarked: "Whenever Mr. Rollins speaks of his wife his tone somehow makes you think he is mentally lifting his hat."

On a Pedestal

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ON A PEDESTAL

I

"Is this Mr. Appleton?"

"Yes, sir; take a seat."

"My name is Ralph Armstrong."

"Late of Boylford college?"

"Yes." With an air of surprise.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Armstrong; I thought you were entirely right in that matter."

"Then you knew about it?" In still greater surprise.

"O yes; it is part of our work here to know what is going on in educational institutions, especially where there are controversies. These often lead to vacancies we

have to fill, and to pick the right man we have to know the circumstances.—Bring me what we have about Boylford," Mr. Appleton said to an assistant.

A half dozen envelopes were handed to him, most of them containing catalogues, but one of them marked "President Armstrong's resignation". As Mr. Appleton opened this and took out a handful of newspaper slips, Mr. Armstrong was amazed; here was a fuller history of the affair than he had kept himself. He colored as he recognized some pictures from the Chicago Chromeyellow, one of them a supposed likeness of himself. Mr. Appleton ran over them hastily.

"Yes," he said with conviction, "I remember feeling assured at the time you took the only step open to an honorable man. Whether you were right to make an issue

until you were sure of the majority of your trustees might of course be a question; but having made the issue you could not remain unless you were sustained."

"I had the promise of the support of four-fifths of my trustees," said Mr. Armstrong; "it was a case where the chief past and prospective donor to the college unexpectedly interfered, and his word was law."

"Then of course you had to resign, and you were well out of it. That was eighteen months ago; what have you been doing since?"

"Lounging about Europe, studying some, observing a good deal, getting two or three languages so that they signify something to the ear, making a historical background for my reading."

"Ready for work again?"

Mr. Armstrong hesitated; he had not in-

tended to register in this teachers agency; he had heard about it, and had dropped in patronizingly to see what it was like. It did not resemble an intelligence office so much as he had supposed. Finally he replied, "I presume so, in September."

"You couldn't take a place right off?"

"When?"

"Next Monday morning."

"On forty hours notice?"

"Why not? You have been a high school principal, I believe?"

Mr. Armstrong's face softened, and there was a tender light in his eyes as he said, "The years I remember most happily are those I spent as principal of the high school at Bethel. What a delight it is to deal with young people just passing into manhood and womanhood. There was nothing my senior class would not do for

me; there was not much I hesitated to do for them. It looked like promotion to become college professor and college president, but I have often thought I might better have staid in Bethel."

"You are just the man I want. Principal Bruce of Winchendon has been suddenly called away, and I am instructed to get a successor there Monday morning without fail."

"How did Mr. Bruce happen to go away?"

"I don't know. Judge Fellows telephoned me that he had gone, and that only a superior man could fill his place."

"Did you know Mr. Bruce?"

"No; he was from the west, I think; I never heard of him till I learned of his appointment there."

"You think there has been no contro-

versy there? I am not anxious for any more quarrelling."

"So far as I know everything has been smooth; in fact Judge Fellows's one anxiety seemed to be sure of some one who could fill Mr. Bruce's place without the school's feeling the loss."

"What will be the salary?"

"That is left entirely to me. I should think a fair compromise between what they have been accustomed to pay and what you ought to command would be two hundred dollars for the month. I will guarantee you that amount."

Mr. Armstrong was tempted; he had spent more at the last in Europe than he had intended, and this two hundred would be a help.

"You are summary in your way of doing business," he said with a smile. "Half an

hour ago you did not know I existed, yet now you offer me a place to begin day after to-morrow."

"I don't send out strangers like that," said Mr. Appleton. "Half an hour ago I did not know whether you were still living, but I knew a good deal about you, and should have felt that if you were still living you would be a good man for any place. This personal interview more than confirms my good impressions. I shall send you to Winchendon with no misgivings."

"I will go," said Mr. Armstrong, "and try to justify your impressions. You want me to fill out some blank, I suppose?"

"I should like to have you do so, to keep our records complete, but put it in your pocket; you have only time to catch the train. See Judge Fellows to-night, so that

his mind will be at rest; and he can give you pointers to think of over Sunday."

II

Before the first day was over the Winchendon school knew that no mistake had been made in securing Principal Armstrong. He was wholly unlike Mr. Bruce in manner and in method, but the expert hand was felt before he had finished the opening exercises, and the few faint attempts at insubordination were dealt with so summarily that there was no temptation to repeat them. When he called Dick Jones to him at recess to inquire as to some mischief, and Jones began to beat about the bush, he looked him straight in the eye and said: "You know, Jones, I always believe absolutely what a boy tells me; it would be intolerable to deal with boys I could not trust." Jones stammered a little, floundered about

some, but finally to his own surprise told the matter just as it had occurred. This was talked about, and the leading boys decided it was best to deal with Mr. Armstrong squarely. He dealt squarely with them. He always heard a boy clear through, and showed that he considered fairly the boy's point of view. Before the second day was done the boys among themselves had emphatically pronounced Mr. Armstrong all right.

The question of mastery settled, the school had leisure to observe his personality. It was easy to see that he was of a much higher type of man than Mr. Bruce. It would never occur to the pupils to be familiar with him, as they often were with Mr. Bruce, but they learned to come to him freely, and found that he never turned them away impatiently. Even to a small

child he would listen deferentially, advising her in her little troubles as gravely and considerately as though she were of his own age. But there was something lifting about him. He seemed wiser and more cultured and broader-minded than the other men they had known. Some of the more thoughtful scholars studied him to see what it was that gave this impression and wondered whether they could attain it.

III

The third day he was there he had made a purchase in Tucker's grocery and was turning away, when Alice Manchester, a little girl in the fifth grade, who was in another part of the store and wanted to speak to him, ran toward him. To reach him she ran over a trap-door opening downward to the cellar, which by the carelessness of an errand-boy had been insufficient-

ly fastened below. Just as she called Mr. Armstrong's name he saw the door open and the child fall screaming through. He dropped himself down, hanging by his hands to the floor on the side farthest from where she fell, and asked: "Shall I hit you if I drop?"

A faint voice came out of the darkness: "No; it is about four feet."

The effort exhausted her; when he reached her she had fainted. He called up for some one to run for the nearest physician, satisfied himself no limb was broken, and gathering her up tenderly in his arms groped his way to the stairs, the door at the head of which was by this time opened. He took her to the office, where fortunately there was a couch, Mr. Tucker liking to take a noonday nap. He had hardly laid the poor child down, when in came Dr.

Lyndon, a woman physician whose office was near by. As she entered, he was about to withdraw with the other men, but she stopped him. "You are Mr. Armstrong, I believe? Please stay; I may need you."

He turned his head as she loosened the child's clothing and examined the extent of the injury. "Fortunately she did not fall quite on the end of her spine," Dr. Lyndon said at length, "but she is terribly bruised, and there may be serious internal injuries. Will you ring for an ambulance, please?"

When the ambulance came and the office door was opened, Mr. Tucker's anxious face appeared. "Is she seriously hurt?" he asked.

Dr. Lyndon addressed Mr. Armstrong. "It will probably cost this man from two to ten thousand dollars," she said disdainfully.

"You are unjust to me," cried Mr. Tucker; "I would rather give every dollar I have in the world than have her permanently crippled."

There was pain as well as indignation in his voice. Dr. Lyndon turned to him and offered him her hand. "I have done you wrong," she said; "nothing shall be spared to restore the child to soundness and health."

She would have directed Mr. Armstrong how to carry the child, but he was already lifting her with a deft tenderness that surprised the physician. Both the principal and the physician rode in the ambulance to Alice's home, and both staid there till the little one was restored to consciousness. To the surprise of both, when Alice opened her eyes it was to Mr. Armstrong she turned first, and she held out her little hand to

him. "It was awful good of you to drop down after me," she said.

His eyes were moist as he bent over and kissed her, almost bashfully, and he came again that evening. He was able to see her, and he talked with her, telling her simple stories in his grave way, and discussing with her points that especially interested her. "You make me forget my pain," the child said, and the mother begged him to come again the next evening. The result was that he came every evening, and grew to look forward to the hour with as much anticipation as the child. They had strange conversations, for she was a thoughtful child and he talked with her as with an equal, giving her freely his best thought and his fullest experience in all that interested her.

IV

The most fascinating topic to her had proved to be his travels, and finally she had insisted that he should begin with the steamer in New York harbor and tell her consecutively about his entire trip.

One evening Dr. Lyndon had come to call upon her, and hearing their conversation sat down unannounced in the adjoining room and listened.

"What time did you get to Rotterdam?" asked Alice. Then she laughed merrily. "Honest," she said, "I can't help feeling just as if I were swearing to say that name."

"If it were swearing you would do lots of it in Holland," said Mr. Armstrong, "with your Rotterdam and Amsterdam and Zaandam. It was after dark when the train got there. I went to a hotel right on the

dock, looking out on the water; and after dinner I went out to see the town. I had a map in my pocket, but in a new place I like just to wander, without knowing where I am going; one often runs across things one would not see if one had planned what to look for.

"I followed the street where the shop-windows were most brilliant, and when I had passed beyond the shops and the street was less interesting, I turned to the left, intending to go a block and then return by a parallel street. I walked quite a distance, far enough to be reaching the brilliantly lighted part of the city again, but I seemed to be getting farther into the suburbs. I took out my map, but the street lamps were very high and did not give light enough for me to read the names of the streets.

"I never ask to be directed if I can help

it, but it was manifest I must ask now, so when a man came along I inquired how to get to the Hotel Des Bains. 'I am going within sight of it,' he said politely, 'and shall be glad to show you.' To my surprise he took a direction which seemed to me away from the hotel. I did not express any doubt of him, but I wondered, and as we went farther and farther and still saw nothing to indicate approach to the centre of the town I grew suspicious. The street was along the bank of a canal, and I managed to keep him on the water side; I reckoned as I measured myself with him that if he attempted to rob me I could hold my own. Finally just as I was about to say this thing had gone far enough and I did not care to be led to greater distance, we made a sudden turn and he pointed out the hotel to me. When I got to my room and

examined the map, I found that instead of taking a parallel street I had taken one almost at right angles, and had followed it way to the southwestern part of the city."

"When you though he was leading you wrong were you scared?" asked Alice.

"That depends upon what you mean by scared," replied Mr. Armstrong.

"What do you mean by scared?" asked Alice.

"I should say that to be scared is to lose one's presence of mind. When a horse is scared he runs away madly, which is a foolish thing to do. People who are scared usually do silly things. In this case the man seemed to be going out of his way to take me out of my way, and I could think of no reason unless he wanted to rob me. So I was apprehensive and alert, but I don't think I was scared. I was cool and more

than usually master of myself, only I was on the lookout for anything that might happen,'

"Were you ever scared?"

"I don't think I ever lost my presence of mind."

"Did your presence of mind ever prompt you to absence of body?" persisted Alice, roguishly.

"Well, of all the impertinence," cried Mr. Armstrong, playfully boxing her ears; "what right has a girl ten years old to be making saucy epigrams?"

"But *did* you ever run away?" the child still urged.

It was the especial charm of these conversations to Alice that she could talk so fearlessly to this grave, almost austere man, whom most of the children looked upon with awe; he and she were boon compan-

ions. Perhaps she divined that to a man with his broad shoulders, quick motions, and the easy physical grace of the trained athlete, cowardice was not a sensitive subject.

He went on to answer her question thoughtfully. "I don't know that I ever did run away," he said, "but there are many circumstances under which that would be the wisest thing to do, and if it seemed the wisest thing I should do it. Wait; I do remember running away once."

"Tell me about it," cried Alice, clapping her hands.

"When I was six or seven years old I spent a week at Milford, New Hampshire, visiting an aunt there. Most of the time I was with a cropped-headed boy a year or two older and several times as knowing. We had been wading in the shallows of the river one afternoon and were on our way

home when a wagon passed us in which were two men. To my astonishment my companion picked up a stone and threw it after the wagon, hitting one of the men; and to my consternation this man stopped the wagon and came running toward us with a horsewhip. There did not seem any question what it was wise for me to do then, and I started to run. But the other boy called out disdainfully, ' What are you running for? Stay here and face him down.' I turned around, thinking I must stand by my companion, silly as he was; but sure enough that little scamp stood there in the road, another stone in his hand, and threatened if I remember aright to gouge out the man's eyes if he came near. He was so determined and so fearless that finally the man turned around and went back to his wagon, and did not heed the second stone

that my companion threw at him as he drove away. My companion called me a coward to start to run; do you think I was?"

"Not to stay there, a little boy, when a great big man was coming after you with a horsewhip? No, I think you ought to run away."

"But as it turned out, there was no danger."

"But suppose the man hadn't been afraid of the cropped-headed boy's second stone?"

"That's just it; most men who came back with the horsewhip would have used it, so my action was wise under the conditions. But I have nothing of the bravado of that cropped-headed boy. Danger does not necessarily prevent my doing a thing, but before doing it I try to measure the danger there is in it."

"Have you ever been in real danger?"

"Yes; I was once where the chances were very much against my getting out alive."

"Tell me about it."

"This was in Germany. I had planned to spend the night at a hotel near a waterfall and had sent my baggage ahead. I came up the lake on the steamer just at dusk, and got off alone where the stream from the waterfall flowed into the lake. I followed the stream up and sat an hour or more enjoying the cascade. When I was ready to go to the hotel I could not find the path, it was so dark. After hunting awhile in vain, I looked at the walls of the ravine. The rock was of soft shale that could be picked apart, and I decided I could climb up. I got up half way easily enough, but the rock grew harder and I saw it was doubtful whether I could reach the top.

It was impossible to climb back down; I had climbed up by picking out pieces of shale with my fingers and hanging by my fingers and toes; one can go up that way, but not down. So the question was whether to persist in what seemed the hopeless attempt to get to the top, or to drop before going higher, and while I could protect myself as much as possible by choosing my time to fall."

"How awful it must have been," shuddered Alice, grasping his hand in both of hers.

"Finally I decided that to fall so far would probably be fatal, and certainly would break one or more limbs, with which I should have to lie till morning, so that I might as well go on and take what little chance there was. And I actually did reach

the top, though not till long after midnight."

"Clinging by your fingers and toes?"

"Yes, with my elbows bent in tense rigidity. For an hour after I decided to go ahead it seemed hopeless, and I was only doggedly persistent. Then I began to think I might possibly reach the top; presently I could see the top, and then I knew I still had strength to get there. It is a great moment, that in which you are for the first time sure you shall succeed. I have had it several times in my life."

"Tell me about them."

"Why, once, when I was a sophomore in college, as we came out of breakfast to go to chapel we saw hanging between the towers of the library a blue flag with the number of the freshman class over a white flag with the number of our class. I let

the rest go into chapel, and then I took off my shoes and climbed the library wall by the lightning rod, and when the freshmen came out of chapel they saw the flags hanging out of my room, reversed. I had never climbed a lightning rod before, and was not sure I could do it, but when I reached the cornice and saw how the rod went around it I knew the flags were mine."

"How brave you must be."

"That is one kind of courage; it isn't a bit that of the cropped-headed boy. It isn't equal to the courage you showed when you told me how far I had to drop."

"Courage? Me? Why, I am the biggest coward in the world. I couldn't climb into a grocery wagon."

"Nevertheless, when you were on the point of fainting away with pain you thought of me instead of yourself; there

is no greater courage than that. You have the possibilities of magnificent womanhood."

"Do you really think so?" asked the child, wistfully; "I should so like to believe it. You remember telling me once about the woman of whom it was said that to know her was a liberal education. I should like to be like that. Of course I couldn't be a a great woman, like her, but I should like to be that kind of a woman, so true and helpful that those about me would want to do their best. It seems so much more to inspire others to do things than to do them one's self."

"You are an inspiration already, my child," said Mr. Armstrong gravely. "You have made my life very different to me. I was not happy or hopeful when I began to come here evenings, but now I am both."

"Really?" cried Alice, pressing his hand to her lips; "it does not seem possible; but O how happy you make me."

V

At this point Dr. Lyndon appeared. "I have been eavesdropping," she said, "but I felt sure you would not object. It helps me to know there are such men, and girls who will be such women. No, don't go, Mr. Armstrong. I have only two or three inquiries to make and a direction or two to give, and then I will go with you. Our little patient is getting on famously; she will not have a trace left of her accident."

"How that child loves you," remarked Dr. Lyndon, almost enviously, as they walked out of the house together.

"Love seems worth while to you, doesn't it?" replied Mr. Armstrong.

"It seems about the only thing on earth

worth while," said Dr. Lyndon; "all the rest is subsidiary to it."

"Yet I am thirty-five years old, and it is the first time that I ever experienced it."

"How can that be possible?"

"Easily. I lost my parents before I was old enough to know them. I was brought up by a second cousin, who took me from a sense of duty—you know what that means. From eight to sixteen I was bound out to a Vermont farmer who saw in me as he saw in his hired men, his cattle, his wife, and himself, only something out of which the utmost possible amount of work must be wrong."

"How did you get your education?"

"This man leased the farm of the widow of a physician, some of whose miscellaneous books were left on the top shelves of closets. I devoured them. I remember

carrying around pocket editions of Pope's Iliad and an abridged Blair's Rhetoric, and reading them while the oxen rested at plowing.

"I was allowed to go to school winters and I learned rapidly. I completed Robinson's Elementary algebra in a term. Schools were not graded then, and one who could go fast had the opportunity.

"When my time on the farm was up I worked in a blacksmith's shop, earned wages enough to spend a year in a good academy, and got into college as young as most boys. I worked my way through by tutoring and teaching."

"And in all this time you made no friends?"

"O yes, I have always found people friendly to me; some people have done a great deal for me. But such love as lights

up little Alice's eyes when I come I have never awakened in any eyes before.—And yet," he added, hesitatingly, "I was once engaged to be married."

"Tell me about it," said Dr. Lyndon. She asked it deliberately, though she knew she was on ground where angels fear to tread.

"I never have told anybody," he said slowly, "and yet I feel inclined to tell you. I don't know why I am in the mood to talk about myself to-night, but I am going to tell you about her; I should like to get the woman's point of view."

They had reached Dr. Lyndon's residence, a little house she had recently purchased, with a considerable front yard. There was a large, low tree, under which there was a bench, and on this Dr. Lyndon

and Mr. Armstrong seated themselves in the soft June moonlight.

"You will easily see that in school and college I had no time for social diversion, even if I had had clothes or manners or introduction. In five years I hardly varied from bed at ten, up at five, and every hour of the seventeen used to what seemed to be the best possible advantage.

"The first term I was a principal, by an unexpected change of teachers I was obliged to take the chemistry. I knew little about it; the few honors I had won in college had been in mathematics and language. But when I began really to study chemistry it fascinated me. My boys and girls worked with me after school and on Saturdays, and I gave it nearly all my waking hours.

"I had not found a satisfactory book of experiments, and I compiled one from our

work in the class. It was published, and it pleased some teachers.

" One day a man walked into school, and staid all the afternoon, going into my classes and even remaining to see our work after hours. When the children had gone home, at nearly six o'clock, he told me he was president of Boylford college, and invited me to become professor of chemistry there.

" I found the equipment there wholly inadequate, but I interested the students and finally got the attention of Mr. Bolyford, after whom the college was named, and who provided most of the funds. He used to drop into recitations occasionally, and one day he said, ' Armstrong, I am going to give you a hundred thousand dollars for a laboratory.' He did it, and he practically left everything to me; so I was a busy man.

" Still there were social obligations I

could not escape. All the professors were expected to attend certain functions, and when I had to go I went and did the best I could.

"There was one house to which I grew rather to like to go. Mrs. Andrews had a way of making one feel whenever he entered that he was just the one man she had wanted to have come in. Awkward and clumsy as I was, she made me feel at home and at my ease. I even learned to drop in to meals uninvited, and found myself always more than welcome.

"When the president died suddenly in the middle of the year I was elected in his place. It was an unreasonable choice, of course, but Mr. Boylford had taken a fancy to me, he wanted me, and his word was law.

"If I had been welcome at the Andrews' before I was indispensable now. There

was something to bring me there nearly every day, a place was always left for me at the table, I was included in all family parties.

"When we went anywhere, Mrs. Andrews naturally took her husband's arm, and their daughter Cora took mine. I have not mentioned her before, and she was no more prominent in my thoughts. She was a part of the family, as her father was, but such personal interest as I had was in Mrs. Andrews, whom I considered a charming woman, and to whom I felt grateful.

"One day the wife of an older professor asked me, it seemed with a touch of malice, 'When does it come off?'

"'What?'

"'Your marriage with Cora Andrews.'

"'Why should you think it is coming off?'

"'I heard Mrs. Andrews say the date was not yet fixed.'

"'Then I can't name it.'

"I laughed lightly as I turned away, determined she should discover nothing to gratify her curiosity; but naturally it set me thinking.

"I had never looked upon myself as a marriageable man. Until I became president there had been no possibility of it, and since then I had been so occupied with other things that the matter had not occurred to me. But I was now a fairly eligible husband for a girl who, like Miss Andrews, would have plenty of money of her own, and whose mother had always preferred the college set.

"Was the mother really looking upon me as a prospective son-in-law? That would account for her interest in me; for the

thousand little hints she had given me so tactfully, as well as for the hospitality she had lavished on me. Yes, that was possible; I felt sure she would not object.

"But Cora, did she expect it? There had never been a word or a hint of affection between us. We had been companions because we had been thrown together, but I had never felt particular interest in her, nor had she manifested any in me. And yet if her mother expected it, she must know of it; probably was not averse to it. Perhaps she even—. To be sure there was nothing to show it, but as a modest girl she would in any event wait for me to take the initiative.

"Suppose both did want it, did I want it? I shouldn't have known that I did, but when the possibility presented itself there was much that appealed to me. I

realized that one side of my nature was undeveloped; my intellect had been exercised and sharpened at the expense of my heart. I could afford to relax the culture of the one, and yield to the demands of the other.

"And if I were to marry, how could I hope to be more fortunate? If I had not seen superlative excellencies in Cora, at least I had discovered no faults, and very likely I should find her virtues had been merely overlooked. Her father I had always met pleasantly enough, and her mother was the best friend I had ever had. Yes, if Cora's hand was to be had for the asking, it would be more than I had hoped for myself.

"You wonder at the crudeness of all this calculation, but remember I had never had time for love-dreams. The ordinary boy of fourteen is more experienced in the emotions of the heart than I was.

" The more I thought of it, the more desirable it seemed, and the more I determined to ascertain at once whether I could depend on the information I had received.

" That night the family and I went for a boat-ride on the lake. I looked at them from the new view-point, and concluded the chance was worth the attempt. When we reached home the father and mother walked ahead as usual, and Cora and I followed slowly in the winding path through the grounds. Before we reached the house I stopped her under a tree not unlike this—the night was not unlike this; perhaps that is what has so brought it back to me,—and I said:

" ' Cora, I have been hoping something.'

" ' What ? ' she asked. She did not meet my eyes; I felt sure she knew what was coming.

"'That you will be my wife. Will you?'

"'Yes,' she said; and when I drew her to me she dropped her head upon my shoulder.

"The parents were waiting inside, and when I told them of our engagement Mr. Andrews shook my hand warmly and Mrs. Andrews kissed me.

"This was in October. The rest of the year I was much at the house, and I grew passionately in love with Cora. I presume few young lovers are as foolishly fond as I was; I used even to write verses. My affections had lain fallow all these years, and when the harvest came it was abundant. Cora became my ideal woman; all that I could imagine of beauty and grace and charm and virtue I hung upon her like garments upon a model. My inner thoughts, my dearest desires, hopes I had hardly whispered to myself, I loved to tell her. She

told me little in return, but I supposed her life was the white sheet on which I was to write.

" We were to be married in July, and to sail for Europe. The last of June a crisis came in the college. I expelled a senior for unpardonable dissoluteness. He appealed to the trustees. To my astonishment Mr. Boylford turned against me; the fellow was restored to college without even an apology.

" Of course I resigned, to take effect immediately, and I hurried from the meeting to the Andrews'. How glad I was in this blighting of my career to have love to fall back on. I knew Cora would fully justify me, for she always agreed with me. In her faithful arms I should forget how treacherous is the favor of man.

" As I went up the path I caught a glimpse of her white gown in the arbor. I

tiptoed softly on the grass so as to surprise her, as I dearly loved to do, and I came upon her before she heard me."

Mr. Armstrong paused; it was some time before he went on, and his voice was almost inaudible.

"I can hardly tell you what I saw. The expelled student was there, his arm around her waist, his lips pressed to hers.

"'Cora!' I exclaimed.

"She turned upon me like a tigress.

"'I am glad you found me,' she cried; 'I am sick and tired of this double life. I have honestly tried to gratify mamma's ambition, but I loved this man long before I ever saw you, and you I detest, I abhor, I hate. If you had not been blind as a bat, stupid as an owl, you would have seen that I never gave you a spontaneous caress or

word or look. I have simply endured you. Thank God, it is over.'

"I was too astounded to speak. There was a real woman there, after all; not such a woman as I had imagined, but a woman of much more character, in some respects more admirable. There was no question of her sincerity, or of the hopelessness not only of reclaiming her if I had desired, but of preventing her marriage to this worthless fellow. I could only lift my hat and retire, which I did without a word.

"I went to my study, packed my most important books and papers, left written directions for the rest, and took the next train for New York. I could not endure to speak to a person. I sailed for Europe by the first steamer, and I staid there until I came here. Now you see what I meant when I said I had never known love. If

even a child like Alice had really loved me, I should have known that Cora detested me."

Dr. Lyndon was silent for a time. Then she asked:

"Did Cora marry the student?"

"I don't know. I have not heard a word from Boylford from that day to this."

"You are implacable. Did not Mrs. Andrews deserve better of you?"

"I blame Mrs. Andrews far more than her daughter; all the while that Cora was protesting against enduring me, her mother was assuring me how deep her daughter's love was."

"What do you suppose Boylford thinks of you?"

"It is immaterial; Boylford is to me a closed book."

"You do yourself injustice. You were

not at fault for anything that happened; you have no right to allow yourself to be misjudged. Didn't the matter get into the newspapers?"

"Yes; the school agency man at Ipswich had an envelope full of clippings; he identified me by one of their horrible woodcuts;" and Mr. Armstrong smiled grimly.

"When I got to Chicago I bought the Tribune. It gave so much space to it that I bought all the other morning journals. The Chromeyellow gave it the first page. Across the top in thick red letters four inches tall, the article was headed 'DOUBLY DEFEATED'. Then below, in black letters half as high, 'A College President Loses his Position and his Bride'. Under that, 'Young Blood Triumphs, and the College Town Rejoices'. Then came,

"'By telegraph to the Chromeyellow.

"'Yesterday Ralph Armstrong was the most envied man in Kansas. He was president of its most successful college, he was to marry within a fortnight one of its loveliest maidens, daughter of one of its wealthiest residents, and he was to sail immediately for a luxurious wedding trip to Europe.

"'To-day Ralph Armstrong is a homeless, friendless wanderer.

"'What did it?

"'Ralph Armstrong's insatiable revenge against a lover whom he had already robbed of his mistress.' And so on."

"And you made no effort to refute this?"

"What would you have me do? Emulate the man who puts in cards like this: 'The John Smith who was arrested last night for drunkenness and beating his wife is not the John Smith who is pastor of the First Presbyterian church?'"

"No, but a plain statement of facts of the case might be published, which would leave the real truth on record."

"There is nothing published as to my resignation that is necessarily harmful to my reputation. My motives are misrepresented, but people know how to make allowances for that. Mr. Appleton, of Ipswich, who had read the accounts in an unprejudiced way, just to get at the facts, told me as his first impression that he though I was in the right. As to the engagement, of course I could not say a word about that."

"What are your plans for next year?"

"I have thought I would ask Mr. Appleton to find me some place where I can teach chemistry; I know I can do that work well."

"Why not go back to your own laboratory at Boylford?"

"Impossible. I gave up Boylford of my own accord; it is a closed chapter."

"Wouldn't you go back to it if you were invited?"

"Not unless it was admitted that I was right in expelling the boy."

"Why don't you find out what the feeling is there?"

"Why should I make inquiries? I came away; if they want me again they must send for me."

"The trouble with you," said Dr. Lyndon impatiently, "is that you live on a pedestal. There you sit with your arms folded like an Egyptian god, and if people want to communicate with you they must come to you. Why shouldn't you climb down off your perch and look up other people? Everybody must make the advances to you,

so you are limited to those who happen to take a fancy to make those advances."

She had not meant to speak at this time, but now that she was started her vehemence ran away with her, and she went on: "Out of the five hundred children in school you have formed an intimate friendship with Alice Manchester. Why? Because you selected her? No; because she selected you; when she came out of her unconsciousness she showed recognition of you and you responded. She is a lovely child, but if she had not especially noticed you, she would have been nothing to you. She made the choice, not you. You would not have a bowing acquaintance with me if I had not forced myself upon you. Why did you once become engaged to a girl you had hardly observed? Because some meddling woman told you her mother was making the

match. Finding it was all arranged for you, you obediently let yourself be led by the nose into a halter prepared for you. You are old enough and wise enough to make your own choice of companions, but you can't do it till you come down off your pedestal and make advances, like other people. You think it is pride that makes you hold back; it isn't; it is bad manners. People think you are haughty; I know better; you are simply shy."

"You do not seem especially shy," replied Mr. Armstrong, not without resentment.

Tears came into Dr. Lyndon's eyes. "Do you think I want to say these things?" she cried; "don't you suppose I know that it will make you hate me? But I can't see you wasting your great chances in life

through such a mistaken notion of dealing with people."

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend," replied Mr. Armstrong, offering his hand. "I will think over what you have said; I have no doubt there is a good deal of truth in it; I know it was brave and kind of you to say it. I cannot model myself on anyone else. I know I am gnarled and twisted and unformed, but I grew up in the field, and I must remain what I was planted. I may get a little pruning here, a little grafting there, but I shall always be the same tree. I wish for your sake I were more comely."

And he went home disconsolate. She looked up an old catalogue and wrote a letter.

VI

WINCHENDON, N. Y., June 15, 1901.

My dear Jenny:—

I was looking over our catalogue to-day, and when I reached your name my heart reproached me that I had not heard from you in so long. I remember hearing that you went to Palestine to practice and I presume you are there now, so I will address you there. I hope you have the biggest practice and the best pay in town.

Do tell me about yourself. You know how we used to imagine our futures together. You always insisted that while you were providentially foreordained to be an old maid, and therefore sure of eventual success, I should be picked up by some adoring swain before my shingle had been up a month. But you were wrong; I have been here five years now and nobody has so much as hinted of love to me. And I have built up something of a practice; enough so that

I have dared to buy a comfortable little house of my own. There is a mortgage on it bigger than the piazza, but I can take care of that.

Now do write and tell me all about yourself; write on receipt of this, before the warmth of old times it recalls has worn off. And think of me as still

Your friend and classmate,

ELIZABETH LYNDON.

P. S. The principal of the high school here used to be president of Boylford college, near you. Do you know how he came to go away?—E. L.

PALESTINE, KS., June 17, 1901.

My dear Betty:—

I will answer your letter before I lay it aside, for it is just dear of you to write. I am so glad to hear from you. It brings the old days right back, as if we were dissecting together again in the old south room.

Your letter got to me, although it was not addressed to me. The truth is, Betty dear, I am no longer a physician or a Miss. I started out bravely enough, but I met a good many discouragements, and when the best man in the world told me the one thing he wanted was to bear half my burdens, I straightway dumped them all upon his broad shoulders and have been absurdly happy ever since.

I really can't imagine why you have not gone and done likewise. If I had one-half of your beauty or your charm I should never have thought of a profession. To be perfectly frank, I went into medicine because I didn't believe any man would marry me with my snub nose. But my husband says he wouldn't change it, and honestly I don't believe he would.

As to Boylford college, my husband is one of the trustees, so I know all about that. The Mr. Armstrong you mention

was president there, and resigned because he was over-ruled in a matter of discipline. People generally sustain him in that, but he did one shabby thing; he was engaged to a girl, and went away without so much as saying good-bye to her. It piqued her, of course, and she ran away with the very student Mr. Armstrong had expelled. The parents forgave them and took them home to live, but he proved utterly worthless.

Among other things he used to make preposterous demands for money, threatening all kinds of unmanly things if he was refused. Finally he forged Mr. Boylford's endorsement to a note for $1,500. Mr. Boylford paid the note, thinking her father would settle it rather than have the man disgraced; but instead her father said he was only too glad to have the fellow locked up where he could do no more mischief. So the husband is in state prison, while the wife and her parents have gone to

Europe to live. Cora is said to be quite a belle in the English colony at Dresden. I believe she poses as an American widow. It is understood that she has secured a divorce.

For this unhappy marriage Mr. Armstrong is of course largely responsible, but apart from that I think the feeling is friendly toward him. Certainly he was the best president the college has ever had, and since he went away things have gone from bad to worse. The present man is an utter failure, and the trustees are to elect a new president next week. They have decided on a local clergyman, not because he is the right man, but because he seems the most available.

But I am writing too long a letter. Now that the silence is broken, do let us hear often from one another.

Your ever loving friend,

JANE HUTCHINSON.

(Address Mrs. Reginald Hutchinson.)

WINCHENDON, N. Y., June 19, 1901.

My dear Jane:—

Thank you ever so much for answering so promptly. It is so good to hear from you again, and that you are happily married. I shall hope some time to know your husband.

As to the college, if you want a new president and if Mr. Armstrong was the best president you ever had, why don't you get him back? He is here only temporarily, and is looking for a chair of chemistry somewhere. But though he strives to consider it a closed chapter, I can see that his heart is in Boylford college. If your trustees know he was right, why not say so and invite him back again?

He has told me all about the Cora Andrews affair, and while I am not at liberty to reveal what he said, I can assure you that he acted generously and nobly. He found that he had been shamefully deceived, both by the girl and her mother.

I really hope this matter can be brought about, Jane. It means a good deal to the man and to the college.

Your loving friend,

ELIZABETH LYNDON.

PALESTINE, KS., June 21, 1901.

My dear Miss Lyndon:—

My wife has read me your letter in regard to Mr. Armstrong. I wish as much as you he could be brought back here, but Mr. Boylford, to whom the college owes everything, is a difficult man to deal with. He is kind and generous and means to be just, but he does not like to admit he has been in the wrong. Why not have Mr. Armstrong come out here? I think if we could bring him and Mr. Boylford together the matter could be arranged. Let him come as my guest; we shall be delighted to have him here.

Yours most sincerely,

REGINALD HUTCHINSON.

WINCHENDON, N. Y., June 23, 1901.

My dear Mr. Hutchinson:—

I fear you are overestimating my influence with Mr. Armstrong. He has not made me his confidante in this matter; I am not even one of his intimate friends. I happen to know that he is free to take another place, and that his heart used to be in his work at Boylford to an extent it is not likely to be elsewhere. It seemed to me if you wanted a president and had already found Mr. Armstrong to be the right man it would be a pity if you did not get together. But Mr. Armstrong has not authorized me to make any overtures, and he would never dream of making overtures himself. He gave you his best work and you discredited him; you trustees were in the wrong, and he would expect an acknowledgment from you as the first step toward a return. About some things he is absurdly obstinate, and I do

not think he would be absurd to be obstinate about this.

Can't you persuade Mr. Boylford to make the overtures? He has more at stake than Mr. Armstrong, for the right president of a college is not easily found, and everything depends upon him. Besides, if Mr. Boylford means, as you say, to be a just man, and has been in the wrong, he ought to desire to make the matter right.

I don't think I am arguing this matter very well, but I feel deeply anxious that this opportunity may not be lost; it is not likely to recur.

Most sincerely yours,

ELIZABETH LYNDON.

(*Telegram*)

PALESTINE, KS., June 25, 1901.

Elizabeth Lyndon, M.D.

Winchendon, N. Y.

Can you give assurance A. would accept

under conditions named? When does he leave Winchendon?

REGINALD HUTCHINSON.

(*Telegram*)

WINCHENDON, N. Y., June 25, 1901.

Reginald Hutchinson,

Palestine, Ks.

Not authorized to say so but absolutely certain he would accept. Commencement twenty-seventh. E. L.

VII

The Winchendon commencement passed off pleasantly, and when the exercises were over Judge Fellows complimented Mr. Armstrong in a happy little speech that the audience heartily endorsed. Before the applause had subsided a stranger arose and asked, "May I say a word?"

He was manifestly a man of character and position, so the judge assented, without

observing the start Mr. Armstrong gave at the sound of the stranger's voice, and his slight nod of recognition.

"My name is Boylford," said the stranger. "You don't know it here, but there is a town in Kansas named after me, and a college that we think pretty well of out there. Your Mr. Armstrong here was president of that college two years ago, and he was the best president the college ever had. He resigned because I butted in on a mater of discipline. Now when a man makes a fool of himself he can do one of two things,—own up, or keep on being a fool.

"I prefer to own up; and because the matter got into the newspapers then in a way that wasn't fair to him, I want to own up publicly that he was right and I was wrong; the boy ought to have been expelled; it would have been better for him as well as

for everybody else if he had been expelled. So I have learned a lesson. I am here to invite Mr. Armstrong to return to us, and to promise if he comes back there won't be any more interfering. What do you say, Mr. Armstrong?"

When the applause permitted, Mr. Armstrong said: "You can hardly expect me to decide so important a matter offhand, Mr. Boylford, or in public; but I promise to give it immediate consideration, and I thank you for setting me right before these good people here. Some of them have found it hard to account for what seemed to them a drop from a college presidency to a high school, but I want to say that I have never in my life spent a happier month than this in Winchendon, and I consider any man fortunate who wins such confidence

and co-operation as these people have given me."

He spent much of the afternoon with Mr. Boylford, and promised to telegraph him in New York, the next day, leaving him in little doubt as to his decision. His evening hour he spent as usual with Alice. She had heard of the event of the morning, and wanted him to tell her everything that had happened in Boylford. Omitting all reference to Cora, he did so, and was surprised to find how warm his affection was for the college town.

He had told Dr. Lyndon his life there was a closed book and he believed it. With his resolute will he had shut out all thought of it from his mind. But now that he talked of the laboratory into the walls of which he had built so much of himself, and of his classes, toward so many members of

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which his interest and sympathy had grown into affection, he realized anew how much Boylford had been to him. Even Mr. Boylford himself, coarse and arbitrary as he was in some ways, had meant rightly. If he had talked with Mr. Boylford before expelling the boy there would have been no trouble. So when the hour with Alice was over, his pent-up affection for Boylford overflowed; it seemed the greatest blessing of his life that he could go back there.

He hurried to Dr. Lyndon's, and was more than gratified to find her on the bench under the tree, and alone.

"Of course you accept?" she asked eagerly.

"That depends on you."

"On me?"

"Yes; I shall go if I can take you with me; not otherwise."

"Mr. Armstrong!" She sprang to her feet; in the dim moonlight he could see her flush.

"Yes," he said, easily; surely she would not call him shy now; "I have learned something about love since I came away from Boylford; I have seen your eyes light up when I came upon you unexpectedly. And O, Elizabeth, you have grown to be all the world to me."

He had certainly astonished her; not before had he breathed a hint of love. Finally she said, "This is an odd wooing."

"And a delightful winning," he replied confidently, holding out his arms.

"But my profession," she urged, hesitatingly.

"That I leave entirely to you; I want you, profession or no profession." Then

his arms folded about her, and there was no resistance.

They planned till midnight. As he bade her adieu he remarked, "You see Boylford came back to me if I did stay on my pedestal."

"Perhaps some of your friends arranged the matter for you," she suggested.

"O no," he said; "there is no one there who would take that interest in me.—Boylford sent for me because it needed me," he added complacently. She admired him the more for saying it, it was so deliciously masculine.

"I see he will never come down from it," she said, smiling, after he had gone. "I must try to be a skilful curator and bring the right people to him."

Just how he came to be summoned back to Boylford he did not learn till years after, and then not through his wife; which shows that his married life was a happy one.

Miss Dusinberrie's Downfall

MISS DUSINBERRIE'S DOWNFALL

I

"Miss Dusinberrie, you and I will not both be teachers in this school next year."

"I consider that very probable, Mr. Lawrence; but I shall be here."

War was declared, and Mr. Lawrence proceeded to make sure of his allies without delay. He found the president of the board in his factory, and said, "Mr. Orloff, I have told Miss Dusinberrie I shall not remain in this school next year if she does."

"Then Miss Dusinberrie must go. Got anybody in mind for her place?"

"No."

"Look up somebody and have her name ready to present at the meeting next month."

"I should like to explain ——."

"I don't want any reasons. There is only one reason for hiring or discharging a teacher, and that is that the principal wants her or doesn't want her. When he doesn't know what teachers the school ought to have we will get another principal."

"But Miss Dusinberrie has been here a long while and will stir up powerful friends."

"That doesn't matter. The board runs the school. When we don't run it to suit the people they can elect somebody else."

"You think the present board will sustain this action?"

"Five men will vote for it unquestioningly. Morse and Hardcastle will oppose it. Lynch and Hall are doubtful; you had

better see both before Miss Dusinberrie does."

II

Mr. Lawrence went first to Mr. Hall, a capitalist, principally occupied in looking after his real estate. He found him busy with some mortgages. "Mr. Hall," he said, "I have felt obliged to say to Miss Dusinberrie that we cannot both remain in this school next year."

Mr. Hall had not seen much of Mr. Lawrence, and what he had seen he did not like; this new principal was too aggressive, too troublesome. Mr. Hall was a conservative; he did not like disturbance; the best school like the best stomach was one you were unconscious of; this fellow was all the time stirring things up. So he replied, "And you are canvassing to make sure you stay?"

"Not at all," returned Mr. Lawrence, good naturedly. "I never have been obliged to ask to be kept, and I am not likely to begin here. I enjoy my work; I am willing to stay; but if the board think it wiser to keep Miss Dusinberrie I shall go cheerfully, and am not likely to wait long for another place. I chose among three when I came here."

"Then it would be easier for you to get another place than for Miss Dusinberrie."

"Unquestionably; at her age it would be practically impossible to get another place if she were dismissed here."

"Then manifestly you are the one to go."

"Yes; if the people are taxed for schools in order to provide places for teachers."

Mr. Hall looked up with more interest; the fellow was at least clear-headed and

fearless. "What are Miss Dusinberrie's faults?" he asked.

"Her worst fault is the absence of any excellence."

"O fie; that reply does not do credit to your good sense; evidently it is prompted not by judgment, but by dislike."

"On the contrary, my dislike has made me distrust my judgment, and seek in vain to find excuses for her."

"Everybody admits that she is a scholarly woman."

"Her scholarship is the merest smattering; it is the veneer of the cheaper boarding-school of thirty years ago. She knows something of the text-books of that time, but she does not know even the text-books of to-day, and the subjects she never tried to know."

"It is curious that you should be the

first one in twenty years to discover this."

"Did you ever talk with her?"

"Heaven forbid; learned women are not in my line."

"I have; I am amazed that a woman of her environment can read so little, and have so little knowledge of current thought."

"All the other principals have spoken of her in the highest terms."

"Are you sure you have had any other principals? So far as I can judge, the recent men have been vice-preceptresses."

Mr. Hall smiled reminiscently. "There is something in that," he admitted. "How did it take you so long to discover her weakness?"

"You will remember that before my first term was finished the schoolhouse burned. For the following year we were in confu-

sion; the classes were scattered, I could not keep as watchful oversight as I could have wished, and much of what I did see I made allowance for. But I knew something was wrong in our upper classes, and when we got into the new building I set myself to discovering what it was."

"'It' proving to be Miss Dusinberrie."

"Exactly. I wish you would come up and hear her conduct a class in American history."

"You have seen her; tell me about it instead."

"Why if there is anything characteristic of modern teaching, it is that in history the text-book is only a syllabus for reading and investigation. In the course of the year every member of the class ought to have read entirely a score of books connected with the subject, and looked over a hun-

dred for references. Miss Dusinberrie teaches just the printed page; discovery of San Salvador, eleven lines; battle of Gettysburg one and one-third pages. She doses out history as a physician doses out medicine, and the pupils like it about as well. It is physic, not food."

"Yet her pupils appear well in examinations."

"In whose examinations? In those she prepares herself and conducts in public. You may remember that at the first board meeting after I came I asked why you did not have the advanced regents examinations."

"Yes; and you were told that the board did not think it wise to subject the pupils twice a year to the nervous strain involved. I think we were right about it, although we

did vote this year to let you put them in again."

"The nervous strain of these examinations does not come so much upon the pupils as upon poor teachers. It is to test teachers, not pupils, that examinations are needed. If we could otherwise be sure the teachers were all right we could dispense with examinations. Shall I tell you why you gave up advanced regents examinations after you had tried them?"

"Yes."

"Because Miss Dusenberrie could not pass five per cent of her pupils."

"How do you know that?"

"The records show it. The first advanced examination ever given was in June, 1878. In this school Miss Dusinberrie was the teacher of an algebra class of 24 pupils, all of whom tried the examination. Of the

24 papers five were sent to Albany, and every one of the five came back rejected."

"Where are the records of that?"

"Of the class and the teacher, in the school register. Of the papers sent and rejected, in the printed regents report for 1879."

"Then it was because Miss Dusinberrie could not pass her pupils that so much complaint was made of nervous strain?"

"Precisely."

"You have already had an advanced examination this year, haven't you?"

"Yes; in January."

"How did Miss Dusinberrie's classes get on in that?"

"As might be expected from what I have said. In history, out of a class of 35 she wanted to send six papers to Albany, but I demonstrated to her that four of the six

could not possibly be marked high enough to pass, and I rather think the other two will come back, the only hope of acceptance being that they were written by particularly bright children, who expressed themselves well."

"What excuse had Miss Dusinberrie to offer?"

"She complained that the examinations were too long and unfair and expected too much of the children."

"What did you tell her?"

"That her methods were altogether wrong, not in accord with modern teaching; that we must discard the dry old text-book she knows by heart, and teach history as a subject that is alive."

"What did she say to that?"

"She tried to petrify me with a stony glare. When I insisted on an answer, she

denied my right to interfere with her text-books or her methods. Then I said we should not both be here next year."

"You make a strong case. But suppose you are right; that it would be better for the school to have another preceptress: have you reflected what it means to attempt to put her out?"

"Mr. Orloff tells me I can depend upon the votes of a majority of the board."

"Yes, that is true; there are five who hang together and sneeze when Mr. Orloff takes snuff; so much the worse for them; it is just as much a ring as though it were a corrupt ring. But suppose you get your votes and put Miss Dusinberrie out, you don't suppose the matter stops there?"

"I presume some of her friends would complain among themselves; but after the new teacher was established and the com-

munity saw how much better results we were getting, everything would be smooth again."

Mr. Hall smiled. "My dear fellow," he said, "I would give a great deal to have as little knowledge of the world as you show. Let me tell you what will happen if you carry this thing through. You will divide this village into two factions that will last for months and probably for years. Her faction will never believe that you can be right in anything. They will oppose you in the school-board, in school, in the community. They will refuse to trade with the men on the board who voted your way. The grievance will grow with time instead of diminishing; people hug the grudge long after they have forgotten the cause. In the end you will give it up and go some where else, feeling that your work here has been largely

a failure because her faction would never give you a fair chance."

"But why should she have such a hold on the people as to enlist such interest in her cause? She cannot have many real friends."

"In a village like this people are always seeking a cause upon which to divide. We have few large interests, so we have to occupy ourselves with petty ones. But Miss Dusinberrie has friends; she is looked upon as the type of a well bred woman."

"That is one of my strongest objections to her. She has imposed upon the community and the school a wholly false ideal of what a lady should be. The real lady is simple, sincere, thoughtful of others; Miss Dusinberrie is artificial, pretentious, thoroughly selfish. Our school girls are growing

up to imitate her, and they could not have a worse model."

"But this village has accepted her type of a lady for twenty years, and will not reject it because you say it is false. The people will more readily believe that you are no gentleman than that she is no lady."

"The more necessity that her type of a lady be no longer kept on a pedestal by the school-board."

"Very likely, but that does not decrease our present difficulty. To dismiss Miss Dusinberrie is to invite a long and bitter controversy. For one thing, her church will take it up."

"Which is that? I don't happen to know where she goes to church."

"The Methodist; she is the only Methodist among the teachers. And by the way,

if you carry the change through, get a Methodist in her place if possible."

"Why, what has her church to do with a teacher in the public schools?"

"A great deal; not directly, of course, but indirectly. In a village like this almost all the social interests are connected with the churches. Teachers are sociably desirable members of the community, and it is only fair that each of the churches should have a share among them. On the other hand, by having teachers in each of the churches the school is strengthened; all the parents and all the taxpayers are reached through some representatives of the school."

"Then you try to divide up the teachers among the different churches?"

"So far as we can, yes. In Miss Dusinberrie's place, for instance, if there were a choice between two teachers of nearly equal

desirability otherwise, I should vote for the one that was a Methodist."

"You have no prejudice against any church?"

"Not in the least; the board is not a religious organization, and the schools are supported by the taxes of all denominations. For instance, we have always had rather more than a proportionate share of Catholics, not because we were seeking Catholics, but because the Catholic girls who have worked their way through normal school or college have usually done so against obstacles, showing natural ability and force often exceptional. Some of them who came from humble homes become our choicest women. You know that, Mr. Lawrence; you married one."

"Yes, I married one. Her father and mother are poor, plain, illiterate people;

but they are physically and morally sound, and they have a never-failing sense of humor that carries them through any unfamiliarity with conventionalities, and they are welcome guests at our house in any company. As for my wife—Mr. Hall, I have always had a high ideal of woman, but every day since I have been married that ideal has risen as I have seen it realized in my wife. I never realized before that goodness is not position but direction, not where we are to-day but whether we are farther along the right path than we were yesterday. She is a constant stimulus to the highest effort; humble, always looking to the heights next to be attained, charitable, loving God and her fellow-men, intellectually keen, my companion in every thought, a helpmeet no man was ever

worthy of but whom I am profoundly grateful for."

Mr. Hall looked at the principal long and earnestly. Then he said slowly:

"I like to hear you say that. I never married ——". He paused and for some time looked out of the window in silence. To Mr. Lawrence it seemed that he had been upon the point of telling something of the woman he had hoped to marry, and he wondered what rival had taken her from him; perhaps the Grim Reaper. But whatever Mr. Hall may have felt the impulse to say, he repressed any self revelation and concluded: "but I can appreciate what an inspiration it must be to have such a woman continually at one's side.—Lawrence," he concluded, returning to the original subject, "I am with you in this Dusinberrie matter. It is going to be a long and hard

fight, but we will try to win out. I have not been entirely unaware of her faults, but I had not realized they were so harmful. We will have another preceptress, and when her friends fight us we will face them. By the way, Lawrence, have you and your wife any engagement for Sunday evening? I want you to come to our house for tea. My sister will call on Mrs. Lawrence with the formal invitation, but keep the date open; I feel that we all ought to be better acquainted."

As he went away Mr. Lawrence felt elated. For himself he did not care for place in society, but for his wife he was eager the world should know her as he knew her. "The Mansion," as Mr. Hall's fine old residence was called, was in this village the one house that could confer social distinction. It opened its doors to

comparatively few, but those few were always welcome.

III

Mr. Lynch was a pettifogger and justice of the peace. When Mr. Lawrence entered his office he found Miss Dusinberrie already there, and was about to withdraw.

"Not at all, not at all," said Squire Lynch. "You and Miss Dusinberrie are both here on the same business, and you may as well transact it together. You want to get Miss Dusinberrie out of the school. I saw you coming out of Mr. Hall's. You have been telling him why. Now tell me why before Miss Dusinberrie. Tell me just what you told Mr. Hall."

"It would not be pleasant for Miss Dusinberrie to hear all that I told Mr. Hall," replied Mr. Lawrence, coldly.

"O she'll hear it all right," returned

Squire Lynch, maliciously; "these things always get around, and it is more manly for you to say it before her face then behind her back."

"I should think so," sniffed Miss Dusinberrie.

"Very well, if you insist, I told Mr. Hall that Miss Dusinberrie's scholarship was superficial, her methods were out of date, and her example as a woman and a lady not such as should be set before the school."

Miss Dusinberrie sprang to her feet and shook her fist in his face. "You a judge of a lady," she exclaimed; "you who married a common Irish —"

"O Miss Dusinberrie, Miss Dusinberrie, this will never do," interrupted Squire Lynch, seizing her by the arm and forcing her back to her chair. But Mr. Lawrence said scornfully, "Fortunately my wife

needs no defence; Miss Dusinberrie is only taking pains to demonstrate the truth of what I have just said."

Miss Dusinberrie sprang up again, but Squire Lynch insisted that she should remain quiet. "We will consider this a court," he said; "it may come to that before we get through with it. I will be the judge, Miss Dusinberrie shall be the defendant, and Mr. Lawrence is the witness for the prosecution. I will cross-examine him. Mr. Lawrence, you say Miss Dusinberrie's scholarship is superficial; what proof have you of that?"

"The proof both of that and of inadequate methods is found in the fact that her classes cannot pass the regents examinations."

"What have you to say to that, Miss Dusinberrie?"

"I have to say what everybody but Mr. Lawrence knows, that the regents examinations are a very unfair test. They are ruining the schools. Instead of working for scholarship, teachers are working just to get their pupils through. To succeed is not proof of good teaching; it only shows a low aim."

"What do you say to that, Mr. Lawrence?"

"That the question is too large to be argued here, and that it would be modest for us to accept the decision of the vast majority of the teachers and school officers of the state. But even if regents examinations are not an exact test, at least they afford a warning when of Miss Dusinberrie's class of thirty-five in American history not more than two pass. A larger proportion

than that ought to pass any test, no matter how unfair."

"How many passed in your classes?"

"All the papers went to Albany, in all my classes. Possibly two may come back on account of carelessness: one boy omitted altogether a question he could have answered as well as any one on the paper."

"Isn't such uniformity of passing rather suspicious, Mr. Lawrence?"

"Yes," broke in Miss Dusinberrie, "doesn't it look as if he corrected the papers himself before he sent them to Albany?"

Mr. Lawrence turned on her quickly. "Why do you ask that question?" he asked her.

"He is hit," said Mr. Lynch to himself, rubbing his hands.

"Because I have my reasons for thinking

that is just what you did," she replied, maliciously.

"That is a serious charge to make, and I advise you to have your proof at hand before you repeat it," he said warningly.

"Well, Mr. Lawrence," said Squire Lynch, "the matter will have to come before the board, and then we shall see what we shall see. It is hardly worth while to discuss it further now."

After Mr. Lawrence was gone, Squire Lynch said to Miss Dusinberrie:

"I believe we have got him on that fixing up the papers."

"I am sure of it," she replied, compressing her lips.

"Now, Miss Dusinberrie, this is a very important matter to you; it means six hundred dollars a year for a good many

years; you ought to be represented before the board by a lawyer."

"O Squire Lynch," she said, smiling blandly upon him, "I am sure there is no other lawyer to whom I could so safely intrust my case as to you."

"But you see, Miss Dusinberrie, I am a member of the board, and if I acted at the same time as your attorney I could not bring in a bill for services. Now if before the board meeting you should happen to drop fifty dollars where I could not help finding it ——"

"I understand," replied Miss Dusinberrie, knowingly. "I will draw the money from the bank to-morrow."

IV

The board meetings were always nominally open to the public, but there were seldom any spectators. On the night of the elec-

tion of teachers for the ensuing year, however, every available foot of space was occupied, not only because of interest in Miss Dusinberrie's fate, but because Squire Lynch, who liked an audience, had scattered hints that there would be "something doing".

After the routine business was disposed of, the report of the committee on teachers was called for. The chairman read the list, remarking that there were no changes in salaries, and that there was only one change in the names, the substitution for preceptress of a Smith graduate with three years experience. He moved the adoption of the report, which was seconded, and then Squire Lynch moved to amend by substituting the name of Miss Dusinberrie for preceptress. The amendment being seconded

and before the house, Squire Lynch rose impressively to speak.

"We are brought face to face," he said, "with a most singular state of things. Miss Dusinberrie has been preceptress of this school for more than twenty years. She is teaching to-day many children of those she taught when she first came here. She has been respected and trusted and honored. Principal after principal has expressed his appreciation of her. It remained for this *young* man," and he pointed scornfully at Mr. Lawrence, "to discover that she was unworthy to occupy the place she had filled so long with distinction; for this young fellow, himself a stranger here, not yet two years principal of the school. Before he is fairly introduced himself he seeks to introduce another new teacher,

another young person recently out of college.

"What reasons does he give for desiring this change? What charges does he make so serious that he forces an issue and says to the board of education, 'Discharge her, or you lose ME'?

"Why, Mr. President, aside from the fact that he thinks she is no lady—and I am reminded of the two men quarrelling, one of whom shouts, 'You are no gentleman,' and the other inquires, 'Do you think yourself a gentleman?' 'Of course I do;' 'Then I am glad you don't think me one' —aside, I say, from this opinion of Mr. Lawrence, which is no better than the opinion of any lady or gentleman here, and which is at variance with the opinion of every other lady and gentleman here,—aside, I say, from this opinion he has just

one charge to make against her, that she didn't get all her scholars through the regents examinations; and to show what an awful charge that is, he testifies that he got every one of his scholars through.

"Now, Mr. President, I have had considerable experience in the police court, and I have learned one thing, that where a dozen witnesses testify exactly the same in regard to a matter they are all lying; they have been coached, and are repeating not what they remember seeing but what they remember being told to say. So when some of Miss Dusinberrie's scholars pass and some don't pass, that is natural enough; but when every one of Mr. Lawrence's scholars passes there is something wrong. I can tell you what that something wrong is: Mr. Lawrence doctored his examination papers before he sent them to Albany."

Squire Lynch was watching his audience, he saw that he had made a great sensation, and he stopped right there, looking triumphantly at Miss Dusinberrie, who smiled sympathetically back.

"This is a serious charge to make," said Mr. Orloff. "What proof have you?"

"Internal proof," replied Squire Lynch. "If he had been satisfied to have half pass, or even three-quarters, people might have believed it was done honestly; but that every one should pass is absurd."

"What have you to say?" asked Mr. Orloff of Mr. Lawrence.

"That the regents examinations are meant to be a test of the proficiency fairly to be expected, and that every scholar should pass who has been properly classed and properly instructed. As to this par-

ticular instance I should like to offer a little testimony."

The president nodded, and Miss Benham, the second assistant, testified that she had herself gathered the papers in all of Mr. Lawrence's classes that were examined; that she had sat at the table with him and helped him look them over; that the papers had not been out of her sight from the time they were gathered till Mr. Lawrence had locked them up in the iron box and given it to the janitor to be sent to the regents; and that no mark of any kind had been made upon any one of the papers. That seemed conclusive, and the matter would have ended there, had not Miss Dusinberrie sniffed contemptuously: "That girl would swear to anything." Mr. Lawrence's eyes showed the danger signal, and

he asked permission to make some inquiries of Miss Dusinberrie.

"Miss Dusinberrie," he began, "do you remember that on the day of the American history examination Lucy Neal was taken ill and asked to be excused?"

"Yes, sir."

"You directed her to write a note to me asking permission to go?"

"Yes, sir."

"She wrote this note at her desk?"

"Yes, sir."

"I returned it to you asking you to endorse your approval upon it?"

"Yes, sir."

"You wrote this endorsement at your desk."

"Yes, sir."

"Is that the note with your endorsement upon it?"

Miss Dusinberrie looked at the note Mr. Lawrence handed her, and replied, "Yes, sir."

"I will ask you gentlemen to examine that note," said Mr. Lawrence, handing it to Mr. Orloff. "The body of the note is in the usual school ink, which has turned a bluish black. Miss Dusinberrie's endorsement is in an ink that has turned to a brownish black plainly distinguishable. The reason is that the night before this note was written and endorsed I changed the ink in the bottle on Miss Dusinberrie's desk. In looking over her history papers I became convinced that she had altered some of the spellings. This ink shows that the next day she did alter some of the algebra papers. I have here four papers so altered, the brownish black ink being plainly

distinguishable. Moreover, two of the corrections are in themselves errors."

When the papers were first produced Miss Dusinberrie had tried to snatch them. Failing in that, she had protested indignantly that it was a mean trick to play upon a lady; that no gentleman would do it. Even Squire Lynch saw that it was impossible to defend her further, the motion to amend was lost, and the original list of teachers recommended by the committee was elected.

Miss Dusinberrie hurried out of the room, but loitered upon a corner till Squire Lynch passed. She joined him and asked: "Don't I get any of that fifty back?"

"Not a dollar," he replied indignantly; "what can a client expect who doesn't trust her lawyer? You could be imprisoned for what you concealed from me."

"You think I am beaten," she said, "so you go over to the other side. I tell you I am going to win out. There will be three men elected in August who will vote for me. I know the ropes and I am going to work them."

She explained her plans at some length, to Squire Lynch's admiration. "By Jove, I believe she'll do it," he said; and he remained her ally, with an additional retainer.

V

Isabella Hall was much older than her brother; indeed the family record showed that she was close to the three score and ten that seem more than normal. But few would have guessed it. Her cheeks were plump, her complexion was rosy, her figure was erect, her look was alert, and her eyes were quick to twinkle. Indeed in many ways she was unaffectedly girlish. "Belle,

you will never be really grown up," her brother used to say to her fondly, when she had done something that seemed to him especially unsophisticated. She was a sensible business woman, a good neighbor, ready to give herself as well as her money when needed; more than once she had been sole nurse when the need was urgent and professional services were not to be had. Yet she was dainty to her finger-tips; she could tolerate no coarseness in her companions.

This was largely why she had never married. Wealthy, accomplished, an unusual beauty, she had attracted many suitors, but each in his turn had somehow offended her, and finally she had resigned herself to single-blessedness. She travelled a great deal; she had spent the preceding year with her brother in Mediterranean countries. But at home she had little companionship.

She was associated with other ladies of the place in benevolent and other enterprises, and always met them cordially, but she found none she wanted to be intimate with.

When her brother asked her to call upon Mrs. Lawrence she did it cheerfully enough, without expectation beyond fulfilment of a duty. But the moment she looked into Mrs. Lawrence's honest gray eyes, full of spirit and fun, she felt unusual attraction, and as she talked with her and saw how simple and straightforward she was, how quick of apprehension, how sympathetic, how original in her directness, and how observant of little characteristics, so that her narration was almost personation, Miss Hall felt that here was indeed a rare creature, and hoped she might win her for a friend. As she rose to go she said as much, and Mrs. Lawrence, who had revelled in the

atmosphere of refinement and culture, looking into the old lady's wistful eyes and divining there was hunger there, impulsively threw her arms about Miss Hall's neck, exclaiming, "I will love you dearly if you will let me."

She had stumbled upon the straight path to Miss Hall's heart, and thereafter the two women were the closest friends. No day passed that one was not at the house of the other, and as the men also became warmly intimate, almost every day some meal was taken by the four in common, nearly as often in the modest cottage of the Lawrences as in the proud mansion of the Halls; and perhaps with quite equal pleasure, for Theresa's simple dishes were capitally cooked.

VI

On the day before the school election Mrs. Lawrence was having an afternoon

cup of tea at the Halls. "How do you think the vote will be to-morrow?" she asked.

"We are hopelessly beaten," said Miss Hall. "Howard refuses even to be here during election; he thinks it would be undignified to appear where his presence might influence a vote in his favor."

"Walter is just the same," said Mrs. Lawrence; "he is going to be away too. I told him that when he knew your brother came up for re-election he certainly ought to take off his coat and work for him, but he said Mr. Hall and he must both stand upon their records. I told him that was first-rate pride, but mighty poor politics."

"I wish we women had a hand in politics, Theresa," said Miss Hall.

"Suppose we do have," suggested Theresa.

"How?" asked Miss Hall, mystified.

Theresa took from her pocket a small memorandum-book. "That book contains an alphabetical list of every voter qualified to cast a ballot at the election to-morrow," she said.

Miss Hall could hardly credit her eyes. "How did you get it?" she asked.

"I made it. You know I took the school census."

"Yes; I wondered why you wanted to do that."

"I had several reasons. For one I needed the money; we have lots of use of that in our early house-keeping."

"Of course."

"Then I wanted to see the people in their homes and get acquainted with them; there was just an element of settlement work about it."

"I can understand that."

"Then I didn't want your brother to lose by standing up for my husband; so I have made pretty sure of his re-election."

"Theresa Lawrence! What do you mean?"

"Why, while I was asking questions it seemed sociable to have a little chat, and I took care that the women of the district knew just how matters stood."

"Suppose they were on Miss Dusinberrie's side?"

"Not many of them were. The few that I found prejudiced I let alone. But enough have promised to vote our ticket to-morrow to win the day."

"You little mischief-maker," cried Miss Hall, embracing her admiringly, "you are a wonder. But are you sure they will turn out?"

"That is just where I want you to help me. I shall stand at the polls all day to see that none vote who are unqualified, and to check off the names of those who have promised to vote our way. Now in the afternoon *if*"—and she held the old lady at arms length and looked at her roguishly, "*if* a certain aristocratic but warm-hearted person whom I know would get out her carriage and ride around to the addresses I would give her for the faithless, and *bring* them to the polls— "

"Theresa, you are a darling," cried the old lady enthusiastically; "I was afraid you were going to leave me out."

VII

Mr. Hall and Mr. Lawrence had not gone away together, but they had met in Winchendon and had come home in the same train, arriving just in time to vote. They

had agreed that the election was lost. Miss Dusinberrie had canvassed the village as The Woman with a Grievance, and, as Mr. Hall had predicted, she had found a lot of idle minds glad of some new controversy. Her church had taken the matter up, with the more spirit because the Smith graduate was a Unitarian; and by personal solicitation Miss Dusinberrie had pledged so many voters that the result seemed assured.

Mr. Lawrence had even discussed a course of action; he did not care to stay with the balance of power on the board elected to oppose him, and Mr. Hall had proposed to him to give up teaching and act as agent for some of his property. This Mr. Lawrence was reluctant to do, for he loved teaching; but he thought he might be compelled to accept.

As they walked up the hill to the school-

house they saw an unusual crowd about the polls, and when they made their way through were astonished to find Mrs. Lawrence standing behind the inspectors, note-book in hand, evidently treated with deference as a personage of importance. Mr. Lawrence trusted his wife too fully to criticize, but he wondered.

"Why, Tessie, what is all this?" he asked.

"Victory, that's all," replied his wife exultantly; "the day is ours. Look," she cried merrily.

Both gentlemen turned and saw Isabella Hall drive up, sitting erect on the front seat of her most stately equipage, out of which got three women apparently fresh from the wash-tub and came forward to vote. The inspectors turned to Theresa, who found their names in her book and

explained why the women were eligible. They cast their votes, returned to the carriage and were driven away, Theresa having in the mean time given Miss Hall another list of names.

Just then Miss Dusinberrie came up, heading a lot of puffing matrons.

"We'll take a little share in this woman voting ourselves," she said angrily, offering her vote.

The inspectors looked inquiringly at Theresa, who shook her head and said, "Not qualified."

"Not qualified, when those washerwomen can vote?"

"Those washerwomen, as you call them," replied Theresa, "have children of school age residing with them."

"Miss Coit voted, and she hasn't any children."

"No, but she is assessed upon the last roll for more than fifty dollars."

"Fifty dollars! I have five thousand dollars in bonds and in the bank."

"That will interest this year's assessors but it does not count here; the amount must be assessed upon last year's tax-list."

Miss Dusinberrie's indignation was so overwhelming that it made her speechless; for a moment she looked as if she would like to tear Theresa limb from limb, but she thought better of it and went off muttering, the women she had brought following her without an attempt to vote.

Miss Hall brought up two more women just before the polls closed, and Theresa ran over her list. "We have certainly 26 majority," she said, "and I think we shall have more. A good many who expected to vote the other ticket have probably secretly

come over to us when they found how things were going."

She was right; Mr. Hall's ticket was elected by a majority of 82, so decisive that there was no thought of further contest. Miss Dusinberrie decided to move out of town, partly because she was afraid of being taxed on the five thousand dollars, and partly because the fact she had saved so much did not correspond with some statements she had made during the canvass. "I beat the men to a stand-still" she said to Squire Lynch, viciously, "and it was hard luck to be vanquished at the last by that little Irish vixen."

Squire Lynch was not sympathetic; he had gone over to the winning side. "She beat you at your own game," he said, "and she played it square."

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